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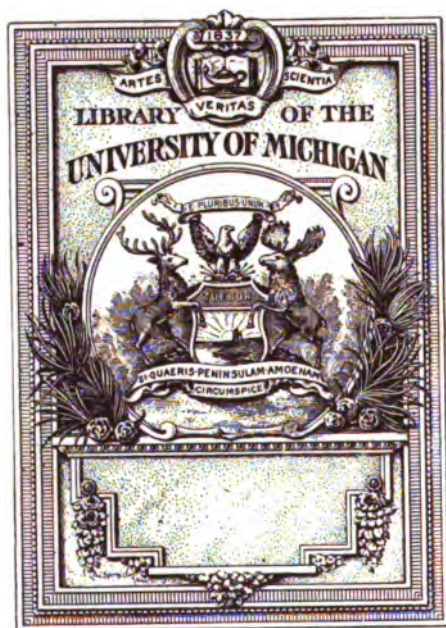
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ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

THE IDLER

MAGAZINE.

AN ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY.



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My First Book.

TREASURE ISLAND.

BY ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY A. S. BOYD.

IT was far indeed from being my first book, for I am not a novelist alone. But I am well aware that my paymaster, the Great Public, regards what else I have written with indifference, if not aversion; if it call upon me at all, it calls on me in the familiar and indelible character; and when I am asked to talk of my first book, no question in the world but what is meant is my first novel.

Sooner or later, somehow, anyhow, I was bound to write a novel. It seems vain to ask why. Men are born with various manias: from my earliest childhood, it was mine to make a plaything of imaginary series of events; and as soon as I was able to write, I became a good friend to the paper-makers. Reams upon reams must have gone to the making of *Rathillet*, *The Pentland Rising*, **The King's Pardon* (otherwise *Park Whitehead*), *Edward Daven*, *A Country Dance*, and *A Vendetta in the West*; and it is consolatory to remember that these reams are now all ashes, and have been received again into the soil. I have named but a few of my ill-fated efforts, only such indeed as came to a fair bulk ere they were desisted from; and even so they cover a long vista of years. *Rathillet* was attempted before fifteen, *The Vendetta* at twenty-nine, and the succession of defeats lasted unbroken till I was thirty-one. By that time, I had written little books and little essays and short stories; and had got patted on the back and paid for them—though not enough to live upon. I had quite a reputation, I was the successful man; I passed my days in toil, the futility of which would sometimes make my cheek to burn—that I should spend a man's energy upon this business, and yet could not earn a livelihood: and still there shone ahead of me an unattained ideal: although I had attempted the thing with vigour

* *No pas confondre*. Not the slim green pamphlet with the imprint of Andrew Elliott, for which (as I see with amazement from the book-lists) the gentlemen of England are willing to pay fancy prices; but its predecessor, a bulky historical romance without a spark of merit, and now deleted from the world.

not less than ten or twelve times, I had not yet written a novel. All—all my pretty ones—had gone for a little, and then stopped inexorably like a schoolboy's watch. I might be compared to a cricketer of many years' standing who should never have made a run. Anybody can write a short story—a bad one, I mean—who has industry and paper and time enough; but not everyone may hope to write even a bad novel. It is the length that kills. The accepted novelist may take his novel up and put it down, spend days upon it in vain, and write not any more than he makes haste to blot. Not so the beginner. Human nature has certain rights; instinct—the instinct of self-preservation—forbids that any man (cheered and supported by the consciousness of no previous victory) should endure the miseries of unsuccessful literary toil beyond a period to be measured in weeks. There must be something for hope to feed upon. The beginner must have a slant of wind, a lucky vein must be running, he must be in one of those hours when the words come and the phrases balance of themselves—even to begin. And having begun, what a dread looking forward is that until the book shall be accomplished! For so long a time, the slant is to continue unchanged, the vein to keep running, for so long a time you must keep at command the same quality of style: for so long a time your puppets are to be always vital, always consistent, always vigorous! I remember I used to look, in those days, upon every three-volume novel with a sort of veneration, as a feat—not possibly of literature—but at least of physical and moral endurance and the courage of Ajax.

In the fated year I came to live with my father and mother at Kinnaird, above Pitlochry. Then I walked on the red moors and by the side of the golden burn; the rude, pure air of our mountains inspirited, if it did not inspire us, and my wife and I projected a joint volume of logic stories, for which she wrote *The Shadow on the Bed*, and I turned out *Thrawn Janet* and a first draft of *The Merry Men*. I love my native air, but it does not love me; and the end of this delightful period was a cold, a fly-blister, and a migration by Strathairdle and Glenshee to the Castleton of Braemar. There it blew a good deal and rained in a proportion; my native air was more unkind than man's ingratitude, and I must consent to pass a good deal of my time between four walls in a house lugubriously known as the Late Miss McGregor's Cottage. And now admire the finger of predestination. There was a schoolboy in the Late Miss McGregor's Cottage, home from the holidays, and much in want of "something craggy to break

his mind upon." He had no thought of literature; it was the art of Raphael that received his fleeting suffrages; and with the aid of pen and ink and a shilling box of water colours, he had soon turned one of the rooms into a picture gallery. My more immediate duty towards the gallery was to be showman; but I would sometimes unbend a little, join the artist (so to speak) at the easel, and pass the afternoon with him in a generous emulation, making coloured drawings. On one of these occasions, I made the map of an island; it was elaborately and (I thought) beautifully coloured; the shape of it took my fancy beyond expression; it contained harbours that pleased me like sonnets; and with the unconsciousness of the predestined, I ticketed my performance



MR. STEVENSON'S HOUSE IN SAMOA.

Treasure Island. I am told there are people who do not care for maps, and find it hard to believe. The names, the shapes of the woodlands, the courses of the roads and rivers, the prehistoric footsteps of man still distinctly traceable up hill and down dale, the mills and the ruins, the ponds and the ferries, perhaps the *Standing Stone* or the *Druidic Circle* on the heath; here is an inexhaustible fund of interest for any man with eyes to see or twopence worth of imagination to understand with! No child but must remember laying his head in the grass, staring into the infinitesimal forest and seeing it grow populous with fairy armies. Somewhat in this way, as I paused upon my map of *Treasure Island*, the future character of the book began to appear there

visibly among imaginary woods; and their brown faces and bright weapons peeped out upon me from unexpected quarters, as they passed to and fro, fighting and hunting treasure, on these few square inches of a flat projection. The next thing I knew I had some papers before me and was writing out a list of chapters. How often have I done so, and the thing gone no further! But there seemed elements of success about this enterprise. It was to be a story for boys; no need of psychology or fine writing; and I had a boy at hand to be a touchstone. Women were excluded. I was unable to handle a brig (which the *Hispaniola* should have been), but I thought I could make shift to sail her as a schooner without public shame. And then I had an idea for John Silver from which I promised myself funds of entertainment; to take an admired friend of mine (whom the reader very likely knows and admires as much as I do), to deprive him of all his finer qualities and higher graces of temperament, to leave him with nothing but his strength, his courage, his quickness, and his magnificent geniality, and to try to express these in terms of the culture of a raw tarpaulin. Such psychical surgery is, I think, a common way of "making character"; perhaps it is, indeed, the only way. We can put in the quaint figure that spoke a hundred words with us yesterday by the wayside; but do we know him? Our friend, with his infinite variety and flexibility, we know—but can we put him in? Upon the first, we must engraft secondary and imaginary qualities, possibly all wrong; from the second, knife in hand, we must cut away and deduct the needless arborescence of his nature, but the trunk and the few branches that remain we may at least be fairly sure of.

On a chill September morning, by the cheek of a brisk fire, and the rain drumming on the window, I began *The Sea Cook*, for that was the original title. I have begun (and finished) a number of other books, but I cannot remember to have sat down to one of them with more complacency. It is not to be wondered at, for stolen waters are proverbially sweet. I am now upon a painful chapter. No doubt the parrot once belonged to Robinson Crusoe. No doubt the skeleton is conveyed from Poe. I think little of these, they are trifles and details; and no man can hope to have a monopoly of skeletons or make a corner in talking birds. The stockade, I am told, is from *Masterman Ready*. It may be, I care not a jot. These useful writers had fulfilled the poet's saying: departing, they had left behind them Footprints on the sands of time, Footprints which perhaps another—and I was

the other ! It is my debt to Washington Irving that exercises my conscience, and justly so, for I believe plagiarism was rarely carried farther. I chanced to pick up the *Tales of a Traveller* some years ago with a view to an anthology of prose narrative, and the book flew up and struck me : Billy Bones, his chest, the company in the parlour, the whole inner spirit, and a good deal of the material detail of my first chapters—all were there, all were the property of Washington Irving. But I had no guess of it then as I sat writing by the fireside, in what seemed the spring-tides of a somewhat pedestrian inspiration ; nor yet day by day, after lunch, as I read aloud my morning's work to the family. It seemed to me original as sin ; it seemed to belong to me like my right eye. I had counted on one boy, I found I had two in my audience. My father caught fire at once with all the romance and childishness of his original nature. His own stories, that every night of his life he put himself to sleep with, dealt perpetually with ships, roadside inns, robbers, old sailors, and commercial travellers before the era of steam. He never finished one of these romances ; the lucky man did not require to ! But in *Treasure Island* he recognised something kindred to his own imagination ; it was *his* kind of picturesque ; and he not only heard with delight the daily chapter, but set himself acting to collaborate. When the time came for Billy Bones's chest to be ransacked, he must have passed the better part of a day preparing, on the back of a legal envelope, an inventory of its contents, which I exactly followed ; and the name of "Flint's old ship"—the *Walrus*—was given at his particular request. And now who should come dropping in, *ex machinâ*, but Dr. Japp, like the disguised prince who is to bring down the curtain upon peace and happiness in the last act ; for he carried in his pocket, not a horn or a talisman, but a publisher—had, in fact, been charged by my old friend, Mr. Henderson, to unearth new writers for *Young Folks*. Even the ruthlessness of a united family recoiled before the extreme measure of inflicting on our guest the mutilated members of *The Sea Cook* ; at the same time, we would by no means stop our readings ; and accordingly the tale was begun again at the beginning, and solemnly re-delivered for the benefit of Dr. Japp. From that moment on, I have thought highly of his critical faculty ; for when he left us, he carried away the manuscript in his portmanteau.

Here, then, was everything to keep me up, sympathy, help, and now a positive engagement. I had chosen besides a very

easy style. Compare it with the almost contemporary *Merry Men* ; one reader may prefer the one style, one the other—'tis an affair of character, perhaps of mood ; but no expert can fail to see that the one is much more difficult, and the other much easier to maintain. It seems as though a full-grown experienced man of letters might engage to turn out *Treasure Island* at so many pages



MRS. R. L. STEVENSON.

a day, and keep his pipe alight. But alas! this was not my case. Fifteen days I stuck to it, and turned out fifteen chapters ; and then, in the early paragraphs of the sixteenth, ignominiously lost hold. My mouth was empty ; there was not one word of *Treasure Island* in my bosom ; and here were the proofs of the beginning already waiting me at the *Hand and Spear* ! Then I corrected them, living for the most part alone, walking on the heath at Weybridge in dewy autumn mornings, a good deal pleased with what I had

done, and more appalled than I can depict to you in words at what remained for me to do. I was thirty-one ; I was the head of a family ; I had lost my health ; I had never yet paid my way, never yet made £200 a year ; my father had quite recently bought back and cancelled a book that was judged a failure : was this to be another and last fiasco ? I was indeed very close on despair ; but I shut my mouth hard, and during the journey to

Davos, where I was to pass the winter, had the resolution to think of other things and bury myself in the novels of M. de Boisgobey. Arrived at my destination, down I sat one morning to the unfinished tale; and behold! it flowed from me like small talk; and in a second tide of delighted industry, and again at a rate of a chapter a day, I finished *Treasure Island*. It had to be transcribed almost exactly; my wife was ill; the schoolboy remained alone of the faithful; and John Addington Symonds (to whom I timidly mentioned what I was engaged on) looked on me askance. He was at that time very eager I should write on the characters of Theophrastus: so far out may be the judgments of the wisest men. But Symonds (to be sure) was scarce the confidant to go for sympathy on a boy's story. He was large-minded; "a full man," if there was one; but the very name of my enterprise would suggest to him only capitulations of sincerity and solecisms of style. Well! he was not far wrong.

Treasure Island—it was Mr. Henderson who deleted the first title, *The Sea Cook*—appeared duly in the story paper, where it figured in the ignoble midst, without woodcuts, and attracted not the least attention. I did not care. I liked the tale myself, for much the same reason as my father liked the beginning: it was my kind of picturesque. I was not a little proud of John Silver, also; and to this day rather admire that smooth and formidable adventurer. What was infinitely more exhilarating, I had passed a landmark; I had finished a tale, and written *The End* upon my manuscript, as I had not done since *The Pentland Rising*, when I was a boy of sixteen not yet at college. In truth it was so by a set of lucky accidents; had not Dr. Japp come on his visit, had not the tale flowed from me with singular ease, it must have been laid aside like its predecessors, and found a circuitous and unlamented way to the fire. Purists may suggest it would have been better so. I am not of that mind. The tale seems to have given much pleasure, and it brought (or was the means of bringing) fire and food and wine to a deserving family in which I took an interest. I need scarcely say I mean my own.

But the adventures of *Treasure Island* are not yet quite at an end. I had written it up to the map. The map was the chief part of my plot. For instance, I had called an islet *Skeleton Island*, not knowing what I meant, seeking only for the immediate picturesque, and it was to justify this name that I broke into the gallery of Mr. Poe and stole Flint's pointer. And in the same way, it was because I had made two harbours that the *Hispaniola*

was sent on her wanderings with Israel Hands. The time came when it was decided to republish, and I sent in my manuscript, and the map along with it, to Messrs. Cassell. The proofs came, they were corrected, but I heard nothing of the map. I wrote and asked; was told it had never been received, and sat aghast. It is one thing to draw a map at random, set a scale in one corner of it at a venture, and write up a story to the measurements. It is quite another to have to examine a whole book, make an inventory of all the allusions contained in it, and, with a



STEVENSON TELLING "YARNS."

pair of compasses, painfully design a map to suit the data. I did it; and the map was drawn again in my father's office, with embellishments of blowing whales and sailing ships, and my father himself brought into service a knack he had of various writing, and elaborately *forged* the signature of Captain Flint, and the sailing directions of Billy Bones. But somehow it was never *Treasure Island* to me.

I have said the map was the most of the plot. I might almost say it was the whole. A few reminiscences of Poe, Defoe, and

Washington Irving, a copy of Johnson's *Buccaneers*, the name of the Dead Man's Chest from Kingsley's *At Last*, some recollections of canoeing on the high seas, and the map itself, with its infinite, eloquent suggestion, made up the whole of my materials. It is, perhaps, not often that a map figures so largely in a tale, yet it is always important. The author must know his countryside, whether real or imaginary, like his hand; the distances, the points of the compass, the place of the sun's rising, the behaviour of the moon, should all be beyond cavil. And how troublesome the moon is! I have come to grief over the moon in *Prince Otto*, and so soon as that was pointed out to me, adopted a precaution which I recommend to other men—I never write now without an almanack. With an almanack, and the map of the country, and the plan of every house, either actually plotted on paper or already and immediately apprehended in the mind, a man may hope to avoid some of the grossest possible blunders. With the map before him, he will scarce allow the sun to set in the east, as it does in *The Antiquary*. With the almanack at hand, he will scarce allow two horsemen, journeying on the most urgent affair, to employ six days, from three of the Monday morning till late in the Saturday night, upon a journey of, say, ninety or a hundred miles, and before the week is out, and still on the same nags, to cover fifty in one day, as may be read at length in the inimitable novel of *Rob Roy*. And it is certainly well, though far from necessary, to avoid such "croppers." But it is my contention—my superstition, if you like—that who is faithful to his map, and consults it, and draws from it his inspiration, daily and hourly, gains positive support, and not mere negative immunity from accident. The tale has a root there; it grows in that soil; it has a spine of its own behind the words. Better if the country be real, and he has walked every foot of it and knows every milestone. But even with imaginary places, he will do well in the beginning to provide a map; as he studies it, relations will appear that he had not thought upon; he will discover obvious, though unsuspected, short-cuts and footprints for his messengers; and even when a map is not all the plot, as it was in *Treasure Island*, it will be found to be a mine of suggestion.



"WAVED A HANDKERCHIEF."

Promising.

BY ANTHONY HOPE.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY HAL HURST.

IN the early days of my University sojourn (it would be absurd to call it a career) I was considered promising. The Provost himself, when I went to breakfast with him on the last day of the summer term, was good enough to tell me so.

"The College," he remarked, "expects great things from you, Mr. Vansittart."

"I wish, sir," I rejoined, "that the College may not be wrong."

"With a little more application," he pursued, "a first-class is, in the opinion of the College, well within your reach."

I believe I blushed. The young lady sitting opposite to me flung up her eyelashes for a demure amused glance.

The Provost smiled kindly.

"Yes, you are a promising young man, Mr. Vansittart," said he. "God bless my soul! It's ten o'clock, and the Vice-Chancellor is waiting for me!"

"Oh, Papa!" said the young lady opposite to me.

The Provost held out his hand; I clasped it; I believe that he supposed me to be going at the same time. He went; I remained.

"It is," I observed, with a profound sigh, "the last day of term."

"Yes," said the young lady.

"If," said I, "you were to come and unlock the gate at the bottom of your garden for me, I could reach my rooms that way."

"Would it be the shortest?" she asked.

"It will be much too short, anyhow," said I.

A few minutes later I sat down on a bench. Daisy stopped, looked doubtful, shook her head, sat down; we pursued the conversation which we had begun as we came along.

"Papa would never hear of it," she said.

"I should not wish him to—just yet," I observed. "But when I've taken my degree——"

"That's two years off—at least," she interrupted.

"What do you mean by 'at least'?" I asked, rather hurt.

"People don't always get things the first time they try."

"You're thinking of the first time I ——?"

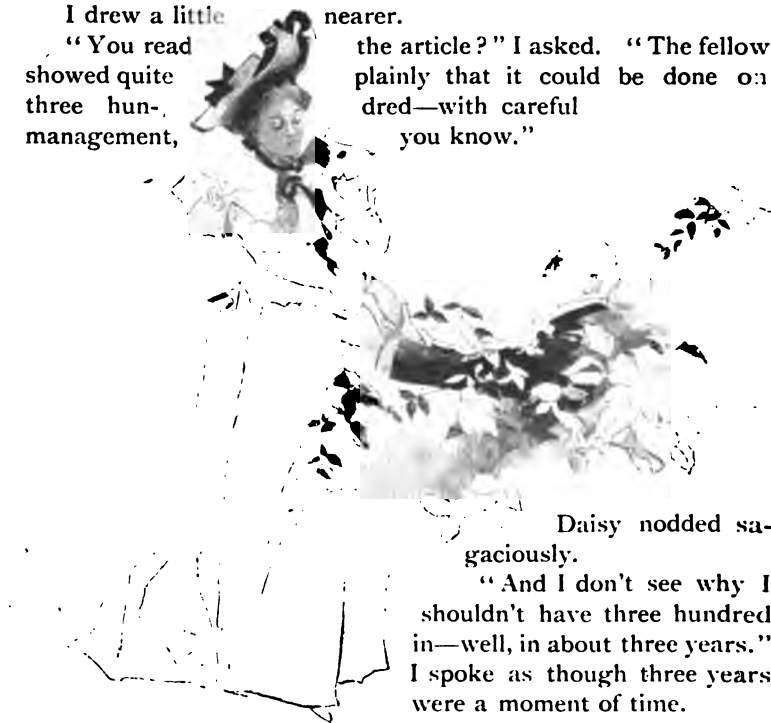
"No, I'm not," she cried, blushing amazingly, "I meant you'd probably be ploughed."

"I'm going to get a first," said I.

"Nonsense," said Daisy.

I drew a little nearer.

"You read the article?" I asked. "The fellow showed quite plainly that it could be done on three hundred—dred—with careful management, you know."



Daisy nodded sagaciously.

"And I don't see why I shouldn't have three hundred in—well, in about three years." I spoke as though three years were a moment of time.

"I shall be twenty," mused Daisy in an awestruck tone.

"It's not a bit too old," I cried.

"N—no, I suppose not," she conceded. "But it's a terribly long time, Dick."

A pause followed. I hammered my cap against the bench.

"It's a beast of a world," I burst out. "Why the deuce can't ——? There's the Dean just got married!"

"The Dean must be forty," observed Daisy.

"DON'T GO."



"He *says* he's twenty-nine," and we both laughed. (I happen to know, now, that the Dean spoke the truth.)

"Dick," said Daisy, in a wistful tone, "I wish you were rich like Mr. Franklin Ford."

"Ford's a beast," said I.

"I didn't say he wasn't *that*, Dick; but ——"

"Of course, if money's what you want ——"

"You know I don't; but I suppose there's no harm in wishing that we ——"

I recovered my good temper; I always did when she said "we."

"I can make as much as he's got," said I, confidently.

"Oh, can you, Dick? How soon?"

I was not going to boast. Assuming a calm and wise air, I answered,

"By the time I am thirty, anyhow."

Daisy's face fell woefully.

"Oh, *thirty!*" she moaned. Then she turned to me with a smile, saying,

"Never mind, Dick dear. We shan't want quite as much. Why he's got five thousand a year!"

"How do you know?"

"Mrs. Jackson told me so. Oh, what do you think, Dick? She said that if I liked I might—she said she was sure I might—Where are you going, Dick?"

"If you're only going to tell me what that wretched old woman says, I'm going back to my rooms. What did she say?"

"I won't talk about it, if you don't——"

"Oh, what did she say?"

"Oh, well, why that Mr. Franklin Ford—(you'll break the corner of your cap in a minute, Dick)—only that Mr. Franklin Ford—(There, I knew you would—your cap's in an awful state, Dick—so is your gown)—only that Mr. Franklin Ford—Oh, how stupid you are, Dick! You know perfectly well what she said."

I flung the battered cap upon the bench, thrust my hands into my pockets, rested my chin on my necktie, and stared moodily at my toes. There was a long pause. Presently I felt the lightest touch on my arm: I took no notice. The touch grew more insistent.

"Poor boy!" said Daisy. "Dick, I told her I thought Mr. Ford horrid."



"THE SLIGHTEST TOUCH ON MY ARM!"

"Did you?" I cried, my hands flying from my pockets to—elsewhere.

"Yes, and she said I should know better as I got older. I don't see what she means. Of course, I couldn't tell her about you, or she'd have seen that my getting older couldn't make any difference. Oh, Dick, isn't it wonderful?"

"Yes," said I, soberly, for a look had passed in the blue eyes that seemed to me very wonderful.

Presently Daisy said in a low tone,

"I wish Papa wouldn't insist on going abroad all the Long. He says he can work better there."

"What does he want to work for?" cried I.

"I don't know," said she. "Dick, why don't you come abroad?"

It was a bitter moment. *O dura paupertas!*

"I've got no money," said I, with defiant bluntness.

Her breath-caught half-way through a little laugh.

"Oh, you poor dear boy!" said she. "Never mind, Dick. It's only till October."

"Only!" said I, in tones a Hamlet might be proud of.

"Will it seem very long?" she asked, drooping her lashes.

"As if you didn't know!"

"Yes—but, Dick, I may like to be told all the same, you know."

So I told her, and *æons* on *æons* of weary waiting rose before us at the bidding of my words.

"And in all that time," she said, "are you sure you won't forget? Oh, well, then, I believe you won't. Think, Dick, what it will be when you come back! You must look out of your window *all* the first day—and *perhaps* I may come by."

"And look up?"

"Perhaps."

"Perhaps you'll have forgotten."

"Oh, Dick, that is horrid of you! I never forget my friends."

"Friends!" I echoed indignantly.

"Well, you know what I mean," said she, indulgently.

As she spoke, the great clock in the tower struck eleven. She sprang to her feet.

"Don't go," I urged. "Daisy, it's the last time."

"Oh, but I must; so must you."

She seemed resolute.

"Well, then, before you go, promise!" I urged.

"But I
then, yes,

"You'll
the whole

"No—

"Not
F—?"

"Dick!



have promised. Well
I promise, Dick."

think of no one else
time?"

of no one else."

of that fellow, Franklin

I told you I hated him.

Aren't you going to
promise, too?"

The garden
seemed peaceful and
quiet. We sat down
on the bench again for a
moment—or it was meant
to be a moment. But
such moments are endowed
from Heaven with blessed
elasticity. I think I prom-
ised for a full quarter of
an hour.

Then, at a cry from
Daisy, I looked up. A tall
stout man in gold spectacles stood
looking down at us, a curious, only half-
unkind, smile on his face. It was the Pro-
vost. I felt crimson all over, and sat
speechless.

"Pray, what's the meaning of this,
Mr. Vansittart?" he asked, the mixed
smile still on his lips.

I looked at him in fright for an instant.
Then a pride arose in me. I cleared my
throat and began, "Sir, I am prom-
ising——"

"I PROMISED."

The demon of irony raked up, in the
Provost's mind, the memory of his last
words to me. Oh, that I had found
another exordium for my heroic speech!

"Upon my word," said he, thrusting one hand into his
cross-cut trouser-pocket, and pulling at his whisker with the other,

"you are promising, for your age very promising, Mr. Vansittart."

The bubble was broken. Daisy hung her head ; I was red and hot again.

"Very promising !" chuckled the Provost, jingling the money in his pocket. "Very promising indeed !"

I could have struck him for his mocking iteration.

"Daisy, go indoors," said he, "and, Mr. Vansittart, may I lend you my key of the garden gate? Pray be so good as to return it to the porter."

He handed it to me with a polite bow. Daisy was in retreat, hurrying in sad shame towards the house. I took the key.

"I meant it, sir," I stammered.

"You're a young fool," said he. And then he held out his hand.

"Yes, a young fool," he said again, as he shook hands. I went.

He stood, watching my exit. I looked back as I reached the gate. He was there still ; and, behind him, in the porch, waved a handkerchief. I passed through the gate and locked it behind me.

And was the Long very long, and did I forget her in the Long ?

I am willing to answer, at any cost to my own character, all material questions. But that question is immaterial. For she forgot me in the Long.

Dear me, I hope she's happy somewhere !



"VERY!"



WHEN WE STARTED OFF THE INHABITANTS KINDLY GAVE US ADVICE, AND SEEMED
MUCH INTERESTED IN OUR WELFARE.

“Killarney’s Lakes and Dells.”

BY THE VICTIM.

THE air of Killarney is soft and soothing, making it easy for a man to sleep. Sleep is a boon, not everywhere obtainable. I was therefore slightly annoyed when someone rapped at the door of No. 47. I unbolted the door, and peered around the edge of it. One has to be cautious, for it might have been the girl with the hot water, rapping under the mistaken idea that the bell of 47 had rung. A youth stood there.

“Are ye for the Gap of Dunloe this morning, sir?” he asked, civilly. Sometimes a civil question deserves a civil answer, but not at that hour in the morning, when a man has been awakened from a sweet and refreshing sleep. Two boots, which I recognised as my own, were just outside the door, having received a polish that everyone admits is not possessed by their owner. I picked one of them up.



AND THE WOMEN WERE ALL CONVINCED WE WERE VERY THIRSTY, SO THEY URGED US TO DRINK WHISKEY AND GOAT'S MILK, A BEVERAGE THAT THE BARRISTER SUAVELY DECLINED WITH MANY THANKS.

"Pay attention, boy," I said, shaking the heavy boot threateningly at him, "if while I stay at this hotel you dare to rap me up in order to acquire information of no use to any one but the owner, I'll assault and batter you with this boot, and take my chances under the Intimidation Act. Do you understand that?"

"Yes, sir. Are ye for the Gap of ——"

"Get out! Go downstairs and stay there, or there will be a gap in the service of this hotel. Break away!"

I slammed the door, and bolted it noisily, to show my disapprobation at being disturbed. A convent bell was chiming musically in the distance, as if in measured protest against man allowing his angry passions to get the better of him. Once in bed again, the bell seemed to float further and further away, until it was merely the tinkle of a goat bell in the Alps, coming dreamily down from the mountains, and at last it merged into—

"Rap-rap-rap."

I sprang up wide awake, using anything but monkish language. I again cautiously and quietly opened the door, so as to give the boy no premature inkling of my real feelings



THE CAR BROKE DOWN WITH A CRASH, AND THE BUGLER, WHO EVIDENTLY HAD SOME RELATIVE IN THE WHEELWRIGHT TRADE, TOOTLED JOYOUSLY ON HIS HORN, TO AWAKE THE ECHOS OF THE GLEN.

towards him. I flung the boot with a speed and dexterity that I expected would take him by surprise, and somewhere in the middle of himself. As it happened, the dignified porter of the hotel stood rather to one side, and so the boot went hurtling down the long passage.

"I beg your pardon," I said, humbly, "there is of course no excuse for my missing you, at such close quarters, but I thought it was the boy again, and I threw with heedless haste. My fault, entirely. Did you want to see me?"

"I did, sir," answered the porter. "The boy wasn't sure whether you were going or not, sir."

"Oh, wasn't he? Well, I made no attempt to conceal my intentions from him. When you go downstairs I wish you would collect all the employés of this hotel, and inform them that I am not going to the Gap. Then take them all on an excursion with you through the pass, and charge it to No. 47. I feel I will not be allowed to sleep unless I get you all away on a trip. Good-bye. I hope you will spend a happy day."

Now in London, if I were awakened at an untimely hour in



SO WE TOOK TO THE HORSES. I REGRET THAT I AM NOT AS GRACEFUL ON HORSEBACK AS I USED TO BE YEARS AGO WHEN I WAS THE MARVEL AND AMAZEMENT OF ROTTEN ROW.

the morning, I could not get to sleep again, but Killarney air, as I have said, differs from the London atmosphere. Besides being pure, it is restful. Getting into bed again, I heard one car drive away, then a second. The rumble of the wheels of the third, in a most curious way, merged itself into the roar of the sea, and the soothing rhythm of the waves gradually—

"Rat-tat-tat."

Somebody at the door again. This was intolerable. I hoped the intruder was the landlord himself, and I resolved to deluge him with language terse and strong. Language, if rightly handled, is more effective than the heaviest boot wielded by either foot or hand. The people of Ireland are singularly reserved in the use of language, so I expected that a torrent of abuse from my lips would have a greater effect than in a more voluble country. I flung open the door.

Heavens ! it was the girl with the hot water.

There was nothing to do but to break suddenly for cover.

"I didn't ring," I protested feebly.

"No, sir," she admitted, "but the lady and gentleman down-



THE GAP ITSELF IS A NARROW PASSAGE BETWEEN TWO HUGE BOULDERS. AND LOOKING DOWN THE PASS YOU GET A GLIMPSE OF THE PRETTY BLUE LAKES.

stairs said that you ought to have been up long ago. The car is waiting, sir. They said they would give you ten minutes to dress and have breakfast, sir."

"Oh, that's very good of them," I murmured.

There is no resisting fate. It seems that foolish tourists have for years been in the habit of coming to Killarney, not for rest and quiet, as they should, but for the purpose of looking at scenery. Thus the inhabitants have come to expect that a peaceful man shall undertake a giddy round of excursions, beginning generally at unearthly hours in the morning and lasting all day. This pernicious custom tends to the enrichment of car drivers, boat proprietors, pony owners, guides, and has the further local advantage that you pay for your board by the day, and take your meals in the mountains and on the lakes, much to the joy of hotel keepers.

The car was waiting at the door, with the Lady and the Barrister on one side, while I, in a chorus of reproaches at being late, climbed reluctantly up on the other. We went tearing down the main street of Killarney, at a rate warranted to wake up the most sleepy passenger. To an amateur jaunter the jaunting car seems a most unsafe and devil-may-care vehicle.



HE WAS A NICE BOY, AND WOULD HOLD THE PONY WHILE HE TOLD THE LADY SOME WONDERFUL LEGENDS ABOUT THE LAKES, WHICH PERHAPS SHE MIGHT HAVE BELIEVED IF SHE HAD NOT BEEN ON HORSEBACK.

You sit sideways over one of the two wheels, with nothing between you and the flying hedge. You expect every minute to be thrown on your face in the ditch, and it is a constant wonder to you that you still are in your place on the car. The driver goes with a reckless speed that is terrifying, and you have nothing to hold on by. After a while you begin to realise that the car is merely having its fun with you, and that besides being the easiest riding machine in the world it is as safe as a church.

We went through the Killarney streets at express speed, scattering crowds of good-natured urchins, who seemed just to escape the flying wheel by an inch, fluttering off to each side of the road like a bevy of wild fowl.

Outside the town was a pretty road with a deep sunless plantation to the left, and the gentle hills to the right. Above the trees, overlooking the lake, arose the many chimneys of the mansion of the Earl of Kenmare, one of the two owners of the lakes of Killarney. It seems to be the habit of the nobility and gentry of Ireland to build a house about three times more expensive than they can afford, and then slide gently into bankruptcy. It must not be understood that the Earl is bank-



AND THEY RAN, AND THEY RAN AFTER US, WITH THE UTMOST GOOD NATURE, JOYOUSLY RECOMMENDING THE MERITS OF THE INTOXICATING FLUID THEY HAD IN A BOTTLE. BUT, ALAS, WE WERE A TEMPERANCE TROOP.

rupt ; I am merely reminded of this custom by the mention of his palatial residence.

We turn to the left, out of this handsome road, and enter a wild country, through a rough lane. Proceeding down this, a startling incident occurred. I noticed four men on four horses cowering under the trees consulting together in low tones. This unexpected sight, agreeing so exactly with what I had read in the London papers, gave me a thrill of fear, and I remembered now, when it was too late, the advice of good friends who had never been in Ireland, who urged me to arm myself to the teeth before venturing into the disturbed districts. I had laughed at the warning in the security of England, and here I was, with nothing more deadly than a kodak, although I had some hope that this instrument might frighten the horsemen



IT AMUSED THE GIRLS VERY MUCH TO SEE HIM ON HORSEBACK. THEY COMPLIMENTED HIM HIGHLY, WHILE I TOOK HIS PHOTOGRAPH.

as it had done many a stout-hearted person before. I prayed that now in time of stress it might not miss fire.

When we had gone about a hundred yards past the forbidding group my worst fears were realised. We were in a rugged and lonely country. The horsemen, it seemed to me, were trying to come to some arrangement about the division of the plunder, and I found out afterwards that my surmise was correct. There were only three of us, and they wanted one of the four horsemen to stay behind and attack the next party. The arrangement fell through, and all four suddenly put the



IN INDIAN FILE WE CROSSED THE STONE BRIDGE HIGH UP ON THE PASS, AND THERE ONE OF THE PONY BOYS TOOK OUR PHOTOGRAPHS, NEGLECTING, AS IS USUAL WITH AMATEURS, TO HOLD THE KODAK LEVEL.

switches to the flanks of their steeds, and charged down upon us at a headlong gallop.

"Heavens and earth!" I cried, addressing the Barrister, who was a native of the country, and supposed to know its customs, "are we to be moonlighted in broad daylight?"

Before he could answer two riders came up on either side of the jaunting car.

"Are you for the Gap of Dunloe?" they all cried simultaneously.

It was wonderful how much this piece of apparently unimportant information was in demand throughout that district in Ireland. I told them respectfully that we intended to go through the Gap if we had any sort of luck.

"Then take my pony to ride through the Gap," cried the two on my side.

"Not so," I replied, "I have already engaged this car to take us all the way. It is very comfortable. Besides I am not graceful on horseback."

"Sure, sir, the car doesn't go over the Pass. You must take a pony or walk."



THE BOATMAN WAS WAITING FOR US. HE LOOKED CONTEMPTUOUSLY AT THE MAN WITH THE KODAK, BUT TOOK CARE NOT TO EXPRESS AN OPINION UNTIL HE HAD RECEIVED HIS FEE. HE WAS A WISE MAN.

This was a revelation. I appealed to the driver, but he shook his head and assured me that a car had not gone through the Gap since the beginning of the world, which is a reasonably long time. Further enlightenment followed, and I came to the conclusion that the Dunloe excursion was the most ingeniously arranged trip I had ever had experience of. You hired a car and that took you to the foot of the Pass ; then you engaged a pony and that took you over the Pass ; next you came to the lakes and were compelled to take a boat ; finally the boat landed you at Ross Castle where you took another car to the hotel. If they had arranged a railway journey and a balloon ascension in connection with this circular tour, they would have had the thing reasonably complete. However, I must, in justice to all concerned, add that the whole trip is so cheap, and everybody connected with it so civil and attentive, that no one has a right to grumble.

"If you have nothing more to say," remarked the Barrister, "I will now proceed to select the ponies that are to take us across. It is a subject you know nothing about, so you will facilitate negotiations by keeping quiet."

A lawyer always dislikes to hear anyone talking but himself,



THE EXPLORERS DASHED DOWN THE RAPIDS AND UNDER THE BRIDGE. THE BOATMAN HAD AN IDEA THAT THOSE RAPIDS WOULD MAKE NIAGARA TURN PALE WITH ENVY.

even when he has to speak for nothing, which he seldom does.

The Barrister stopped the car and then addressed the four men.

"You see that hut by the top of the hill. Well, you race for the hut, turn at the rock in front and come back to us. Then I'll tell you what ponies I want. Are you ready? Go!"

Away dashed the four horsemen, their coat-tails flying like banners behind them; round they turned in a body, and down the hill towards us they came like a cyclone, each man bending over the neck of his charger while he lashed wildly with his switch.

The horse attached to the car, frightened at this unusual demonstration, swerved round square across the narrow road and tried to get away. Three of the riders went into the ditch to escape running over us, while the fourth managed to rein up in time.

"I'll take the three men in the ditch," said the Barrister.

The fourth rider loudly protested and proclaimed the exceptional merits of his beast, but the die was cast, and, seeing that nothing could move the hard heart of the legal gentleman,



IT IS A VERY BEAUTIFUL ARCH, WITH THE MIDDLE LAKE ON THIS SIDE, AND THE LOWER LAKE SEEN IN THE DISTANCE BEYOND.

he trotted back towards Killarney to await another victim. The three horsemen fell in line behind like a guard of honour, and thus we jogged on for the foot of the Pass.

Other riders met us, but the self-satisfied air of the three cavalry men behind us showed them that the bargain had been made and that appeals were useless. Some of them, however, had the kindness to inform us that the three ponies chosen were the very worst in that district, but this was so evidently envy, that we paid no attention to it. One rider, however, made a strong appeal to our sympathies. He had a wooden leg, and this he stuck out at right angles to his horse, circling round and round us, imploring us to hire the animal of a cripple. We all felt sorry for the man and had some thought of hiring him as an ornamental escort, but he happened to see several cars coming in the distance behind us, so, turning his horse in that direction and using his wooden leg with great effect on the horse's flank, dashed off towards the new comers.

The road became very rough, and our driver, probably thinking that as we had hired three horses it was a pity we should not use them and let him go home, drove over a stone and broke one of the springs of the car. He got something extra out of us because of the misfortune, and we mounted the horses.

They were most obliging peaceable animals, willing to walk



WE FINISHED THE TRIP AT ROSS CASTLE. THE CASTLE IS BUILT OF STONE HELD TOGETHER BY IVY, AND IT LOOKS AS IF IT HAD NOT BEEN INHABITED FOR SOME YEARS.

slowly or break into a gallop, just as we pleased. The Barrister went off at a canter, being accustomed to the exciting life of the Irish bar, but I contented myself with a walk, having little taste for the more rollicking joys of existence, besides not being sure I could remain where a man should when he takes to equestrianism. The rocks by the wayside looked hard and uninviting.

In due time we came to Kate Kearney's cottage. Kate's grand-daughter came out and asked us to drink her health in poteen and goat's milk, but having some regard for our own we refused. King Midas touched an article and it became gold, a most useful accomplishment to possess when times are pannicky. Literary kings have the still greater power of bestowing immortality on those they touch. Thus Burns immortalized the name of Glencairn, and made it so celebrated that it was considered good enough to designate a brand of whiskey. Three generations ago, a poet wrote of Kate Kearney, and she will be famous from now till the end of time.

There are five lakes and a bog-oak factory in the Gap of Dunloe. In one of the lakes was placed the last snake ever seen in Ireland. St. Patrick, so the guide told me, said the snake

would get out to-morrow, and to-morrow never came. I imagine that if a person were to drink much of the whiskey offered on the Pass, he would soon see the snakes and many other equally objectionable things. The little river that flows into Serpent Lake, twists and turns in true serpentine fashion and is said to represent the track the snake made when going to its lengthened stay in the lake region.

There is a celebrated echo in the Pass, and for some time we had been followed by men and boys with bugles, who offered to arouse it for a small consideration. A reputable firm of cannon-firers, who, with their ordnance, work in conjunction with the echo, the latter being a sleeping partner until the guns are fired, sent advance agents to us respectfully soliciting our patronage. They were echo makers to the nobility and gentry, so of course we paid the shot.

The Pass itself is very grand, and the surrounding scenery exceedingly beautiful. Purple Mountain, so-called strangely enough because it is purple, keeps constant watch over the traveller through the Gap. It is one of the most lovely mountains in the world, the purple heather which gives it its colour being of a pure delicate hue, most charming to look upon. Once over the Pass, descent is made by a long looped road, reminding one of Alpine scenes, down into the Black Valley, a gloomy gorge that fully justifies its name. At last we come to a gate, and here we turn the ponies over to their owners. Good-natured young fellows our three guides were, full of information and legend, anxious that those who rode their steeds should have a good time and the worth of their money.

We now had to pay tribute in order to get to the Upper Lake. A shilling toll is demanded at most of the entrances of the Herbert estate. You get the Torc waterfall and some other attractions at sixpence each. The money is said to go towards maintaining the roads, and the particular tax we paid doubtless went to keeping the lakes in repair. The wear and tear of a lake caused by small boats going over it, is something that a mere city dweller has no idea of. We found two men in a boat waiting for us, not to mention the lunch. The scenery of the Upper Lake is wild and rugged. In one spot a mountain called Eagle's Nest rises sheer from the water's edge, a thousand feet into the air, like a miniature Matterhorn. The chief boatman was as full of legendary lore as were the pony drivers. He pointed out the marks on the solid rock where somebody

and his bride had jumped, and sure enough there were the gigantic foot-prints to prove it. Let us hope the lady was not troubled with cold feet, for they were big enough to lower the temperature over all the south of Ireland, although much smaller than the bridegroom's. Then, turned to rock, and also turned bottom upwards, was their boat, the upsetting of which doubtless necessitated the jump across the water. That boat rocked once too often and consequently remains rock to this day.

We came to a bay with no visible outlet. The boatman rested on his oars and invited us to guess the way out. We all guessed wrong, and our galley slave was happy for the rest of the day.

We shot the rapids under the Old Weir Bridge and drew up at Dinish Island, a scene of sylvan beauty, the like of which is not to be found in many a long day's ramble. Here is the "Meeting of the Waters" celebrated in song and story—yes and on the stage as well, for just round the corner are the Colleen Bawn rocks and caves that brought Boucicault a fortune. The Middle Lake has a quiet soft beauty of its own that is peaceful and comforting after the savage grandeur of the Upper Lake. We pass under the bridge of the Perfect Arch into the Great Lake where the wind from the west coast is raising waves that are quite respectable.

The huge Magillacuddy Reeks stand out in all their majesty and keep an eye on us until we are landed at Ross Castle.



The Real Treasure Island Mutiny.

By JUSTIN AMOS.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY SEPPINGS WRIGHT.

THE halcyon days of the buccaneers of story passed away two hundred years ago. Pirates of swarthy form, wading through seas of blood foaming in the scuppers, have no place in a picture of the nineteenth century. Yet it is not unlikely that the most vivid character among the marooners, whose adventures have interested the many thousand readers of "Treasure Island," was sketched from life on board a British barque within the last twenty years.



THE "CASWELL."

The following narrative was

told by the witnesses at the trial of Christos Bombos for mutiny and murder, at the Cork Assizes, 1876, and is taken from the Crown records of the time.

The *Caswell* was launched from Dumbarton in 1875, and on the 1st of July sailed from the Clyde on her first and most eventful voyage, under the command of Captain Best, William

Wilson being first mate, McLean second mate, and Griffins chief steward. There were nine seamen and two apprentices, Ferguson and McDonald, making in all a crew of fifteen hands.

Trouble arose among some of the men during the voyage to Buenos Ayres, and, on arrival at the port, seven of the sailors being anxious to leave the ship, it was decided to discharge them, provided other seamen could be found to take their places. McLean was sent on shore to engage the new hands, and was fortunate in his first recruiting, in securing the services of two English sailors, Dunne and Carrick. No other Englishmen were available in the port; but one George Pano, a Greek seaman of splendid physique and enormous stature, volunteered not only to sign articles for the *Caswell* himself, but to select from the foreigners idle in the harbour the men most suitable for an English vessel, who had served before on British ships. The result of his levy was to enter on the ship's books Joseph Pistorio, Nicholas Morelas, Christos Bombos, and Gaspar Pistorio, all rated as able-bodied seamen. The two Pistorios were Maltese, Morelas and Bombos were Greeks.

The *Caswell* proceeded to Valparaíso, whence she received orders to set out for Autofagasto, and from Autofagasto the vessel sailed on the 1st of January, 1876, for Queenstown, one short in her complement, owing to the desertion of the cook, whose place was taken by Morelas.

On the morning of the 4th of January there came on deck, on the Captain's watch, Joseph Pistorio, who took the helm, Bombos, Pano, Carrick, and Ferguson. The second apprentice, McDonald, was rattling down the rigging, and Morelas was in the galley preparing the officers' breakfast. Big George was ordered to take McDonald's place. Accordingly, he clambered into the starboard shrouds in the main rigging and, drawing his knife, slowly and clumsily proceeded to work. From the fo'c's'le came Gaspar Pistorio, whose watch had just before gone below, as Captain Best, with a few angry words, approached the rigging in which the big Greek was working to show Pano how to pass seizing.

The captain stood with his right hand grasping the shrouds, as the Greek dropped on the deck beside him. Then rang through the ship a moaning howl of pain, as the glittering knife swept once upwards, once across his stomach, and the Commander fell a shapeless, bleeding mass. At the cry, the ship sweated blood. Joseph Pistorio leapt from the wheel, and, draw-

ing a revolver, fired at the writhing form of Best, blowing his lower jaw to atoms, then rushed to the port side where the second mate McLean stood paralysed at the horrible butchery enacted before his eyes. "Not me, Joseph," he cried, as a bullet through his body stretched him at the bitts. Wilson rushed on deck, and was met by two shots in rapid succession from Gaspar Pistorio.

Wounded in the arm, the mate rushed forward, shouting to the apprentice to take the helm and put the



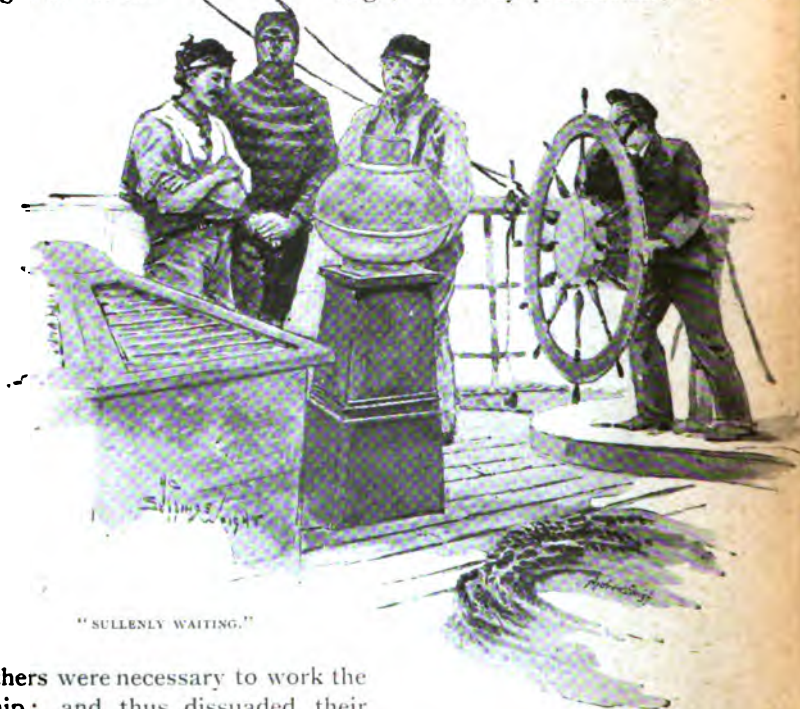
"A HOWL OF PAIN!"

ship aback, but as the unfortunate man passed the galley, Morelas stepped out with a flesher in his hand, and with three fearful gashes, cut out the heart of the ill-fated officer, who one moment later was slashed to ribands by the knives of the Greeks. Griffins, the steward, was summoned on deck by a shout from

Joseph Pistorio, shot by the Maltese, and hacked to death by Bombos.

The officers assassinated, Bombos and Pistorio endeavoured to break open the carpenter's shop, where McGregor had taken refuge ; but finding it locked and barricaded they desisted in the attempt. Other seamen stood on the poop, sullenly awaiting death. One apprentice stood pale and motionless, leaning on the wheel, the other crouched in the bow.

The four foreigners came aft to where Big George stood beside the captain's body. He rose to his feet, demanding of his companions why the work had not been completed, and they, numbed by the sight of the carnage, hurriedly pleaded that the



"SULLENLY WAITING."

others were necessary to work the ship ; and thus dissuaded their leader from further bloodshed.

The four bodies were then dragged together, some fathoms of rope were cut from the falls, one of the anchors dragged aft, and lashed to the officers' remains. As they were doing this they saw McGregor leave the deck-house. Pano called to him to approach,

and swear to help them to the best of his abilities ; and, kneeling in the pool of blood beside the bodies, McGregor took the oath.

Then there came the crowning horror of the fearful day. The captain's mangled body lay upon its back, a ghastly chasm about the throat, the trunk slimy with the coagulation of the gore that had clotted on the ragged wounds of the knife ; the eyes were closed, the hair matted down upon them. As the murderers slid the remains over the side, the eyes opened, the shattered head was raised, the hands clutched at the rail, but the feet slipped from the rope which lashed them to the anchor, and, as the



"THE CAPTAIN SINKING."

ship plunged on, one glimpse was seen by Carrick of his captain sinking in the darkened waters.

Then Big George ruled the ship. The Englishmen were separated in the watches, and dogged by the mutineers day and night. Pano pleaded for the death of all, but the Maltese argued that none of the rest could lay a course or take the sun.

Every day Carrick was brought into the the cabin to figure out the day's reckoning and teach Morelas, who was to command the vessel when the last of the prisoners had fallen under the

knife. In a month's time they were off the River Plate, and the two Pistorios, taking a share of the plunder of the cabins, launched the ship's lifeboat and went ashore. For a week the vessel awaited their return, then with the wild idea of making Samos, short handed as he was, Big George weighed anchor on his last trip.

Morelas was a good sailor, and under the tuition of the Englishman had picked up much of the knowledge of the quarter-deck. A shrewd man, he recognised that the only chance of making money by their venture was to reach some port where they might sell the ship. To do so the Englishmen must help.

But Pano, fearing the prisoners, who now outnumbered their captors, daily grew more ferocious and blood-thirsty in his desire to complete the butchery that had begun in the assassination of the officers. Forbidden by his comrades to murder in cold blood, the Greek sought to provoke a quarrel that might form his excuse for the accomplishment of his design.

One night he blustered into the fo'c's'le, and, drawing his knife, grasped one of the apprentices by the arm, and drew the blade across the lad's throat. A slight scratch appeared, from which a few drops of blood trickled. McGregor was standing by, his hands clenched in passion, as he watched the bully, who seized a pan of boiling rice from the stove and flung it into the carpenter's face, raising his weapon as he did so, in anticipation of a blow. Yet no blow was struck. It seemed as if the prisoners

had yielded in their slavery every trace of manhood.

But that night there surged to the minds of the captives the thought that the end was soon to come. How, or when, they knew not, for no word was spoken between them; but gradually the feeling grew into a thought that it had been ordained that on a certain day they would make a bid for liberty and vengeance. How the day was fixed they never knew. They *felt* that it had been so, by some extraordinary and unexplained communion of



"BLUSTERED INTO THE
FORECASTLE."

their minds. The day dawned ; McGregor came on deck in the morning, and found the Greeks on the poop. The lad whose throat had been wounded was engaged in the fore rigging, notwithstanding that the scratch, slight though it appeared, had never ceased to bleed, and that he complained of fearful giddiness while working aloft. As the carpenter was passing the mast he heard a cry, and saw the apprentice tear the bandage from his wounded neck, and fall to the deck. McGregor returned below as if to obtain help for the lad, and in his workshop met his comrades silently assembled, having felt the call. They armed themselves with tools and went on deck, where Pano stood by the helm alone, the other Greeks having gone to the cabin.

The giant gave no cry. His fiery eyes glittered as he set his teeth in a cruel grin, and, with his long knife, advanced upon his assailants. Carrick leapt forward, struck at the bully with an axe, and missed. The knife flashed towards the sailor's heart, but as it did so McGregor swung his adze, and sunk its edge in the skull of the mutineer.



"WILL SAIL MANY OCEANS."

Morelas rushed on deck. Twice he plunged his knife in Carrick, but the Englishman struck him to the deck, smashing in his chest with the hatchet.

Bombos fought for his life, with knife and iron bolt, in the darkness of the cabin ; until, beaten to helplessness, he surrendered, and was put in irons.

And through the day Morelas and Big George lay in the scuppers, knife in hand, with their eyes fixed on their foes. Too weak to move, they lurched with the pitch of the vessel, the handle of the adze wedged in Pano's shaggy head, beating time to the death-song which he groaned. And in the night the groaning ceased, and the clank of the weapon, as the lifeless skull rolled against the bulwarks, was the only sound that

answered the splash of the waters and the booming of the sails. In the grey dawn of morning the two bodies were thrown into the deep.

Bombos was tried and hanged, and Joseph Pistorio, three years later, followed him to the gallows.

"*Caswell* no more," Pistorio had cried, as the vessel still reeked with the carnage of the first day's slaughter; and although the barque still sails the many oceans of the globe, never since that day has she borne that ill-omened name.

And Gaspar Pistorio still lives.

Some day the survivors of the crew may meet again to testify at Gaspar's trial. Perhaps the hand of justice and of vengeance may strike no more, and in this record be found the last chapter of the *Caswell's* history.

THE BANQUET



Hopkins's Safe.

BY W. L. ALDEN.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. JACK.

"**I** SEE," said the Jericho station-master, "that a train on the Denver road has just been held up, and the safe robbed of over three hundred thousand dollars. Well! these things has to happen so long as the present style of burglar-proof safes is in fashion. Any robber that has been properly educated to the business can open a safe inside of half-an-hour, and can do it without any dynamite or such violent ways. Now a safe can be made that nobody can open except with the proper combination, for I've seen such a safe myself. Saw it on this very road too, and it was buried only about fifty miles from here."

"What in the world was the reason for burying a safe?" I asked.

"Because you can't have a funeral without burying the corpse," replied the station-master. "I've got just about time enough to tell you the story before the Athensville express comes in, so set down and you shall hear all about it."

"About ten years ago, or mebbe eleven, I ain't any sort of a hand for dates, there was a baggage-master on this road by the name of Hopkins. He and I were on the same train, which was the regular day express, and carried the gold dust that used to be sent down once a week from Custerville, where the mines were panning out at the time pretty middling well. Thishyer Hopkins—Jim was his name—besides being baggage-master, also acted as agent for the express company, and took charge of the safe. As a rule, the train was held up about once a month, and the safe was either opened by Jim, with a pistol to his ear, or else, if the robbers had plenty of time before them, and took a pride in their profession, they would open it themselves."

"Jim got tired of this sort of thing, and, being an ingenious sort of chap who had invented quite a lot of things, he undertook to invent a safe that nobody could open except with the combination. Moreover, he cal'lated to make it so strong that dynamite wouldn't have no effect upon it, so that it would really be a burglar-proof safe, in good earnest. Well, Jim he



"THE SAFE WAS OPENED BY JIM."

I

worked at that safe for a good part of the winter, until he had got it planned out in a way to suit him, and then he took some of his savings, for he had a good lot of money in the bank, and he built his new patent burglar-proof safe, and had it put in his baggage-car.

"The new safe was about twice the size of an ordinary express company's safe. Outside it looked like any other safe, but besides being twice as strong as anything of the kind that had ever been built before, it had a good many special features, which I don't pretend to remember, not being a mechanical sharp myself. I do recall, however, that it had a spring lock, which Jim explained was for convenience in case the train should be held up very sudden, and there shouldn't be time to close the safe and lock it in the usual way.

" 'Seems to me,' said the conductor, whose name was Sampson, though we always called him Gates, after that friend of Sampson's that he carried away from somewhere on his back—I don't exactly remember the name of the town—'Seems to me,' said he, 'that when you get a pistol to your ear that safe'll come open as easy as any other safe.'

" 'So it will,' says Jim, 'provided I ever find that pistol alongside of my ear. But I cal'late that I've got through with that style of amusement. The next time thisyer train is held up, the robbers won't find me, unless they can open that safe, which is just what I mean that they shan't be able to do.'

" 'Why, where are you going to be?' asks Gates. 'Are you cal'latin' to hide yourself in the fire-box, or under the water in the tank?'

" 'See here,' says Jim. 'I ain't no blamed fool, if I do look like one. No, Sir, I don't cal'late to try any such games as those you're a-referring to, but I do expect to get inside of that safe when the train is held up, and to stay there till the robbers get tired of trying to open it.'

" 'That's a big scheme, Jim,' says the conductor; 'but I'd like to know how you expect to open the safe again when you want to come out.'

" 'O!' says Jim, that part of the business I leave with you. I'll give you the combination, and after the robbers have got tired and gone home, you can open the safe and let me out.'

" 'All right,' says Gates. 'I'll let you out fast enough, provided I can remember the combination, but you know my memory isn't what you might call first-class, and I might forget



"'THISHYER IS A LOW-DOWN OUTRAGE,' SAYS THE ROBBER CAPTAIN."

4

the combination, and never be able to open the safe. Of course, you wouldn't mind a little thing like that, for you'd be snug and comfortable, though perhaps a little bit hungry after a while.'

"Well, the conductor kept on chaffing Jim about his new invention, but the two were good friends, though it was afterwards thought by people who didn't know all the facts that Gates was partly to blame for what happened. Jim he gave Gates the combination of the safe, and the very next day after the thing was put in the baggage-car the train was held up just this side of Athensville.

"The robbers climbed into the baggage-car, and when they couldn't find Jim they brought up the conductor and told him to open the safe. The conductor swore that nobody knew the combination except Jim, and that he wasn't aboard the train that night, but had laid over at Jones's Misery, owing to not feeling very well. The robbers, seeing as Jim was not to be found, believed what the conductor said, and they went to work to pick the lock of the safe. Of course they couldn't do it, for that lock was just a masterpiece of engineering, and there wasn't a man living that could pick it. Then they tried their centrebits, but they couldn't make any impression on the safe. The bits would just slide around and scratch the surface here and there, but they hardly made a dent in the steel. By this time the robbers had got pretty mad, and they slid the safe out into the open, and tried what they could do with dynamite. They must have put a lot of the stuff under the safe, for when it went off the safe sailed more than thirty feet into the air, and came down so solid that she made a big hole in the ground. But when they came to examine her she wasn't hurt a bit. Not a joint nor a bolt was started, and except for a little blackening of the outside she was as good as new.

"'Thishyer is a low-down outrage,' says the robber captain. 'The man that made that safe deserves hanging if ever a man did, for the thing is going to put an end to train robbing, and will throw hundreds of men out of employment. I hate a man what hasn't any feelings for his fellow-men.'

"Well, the rest of the robbers they stood around the safe and cussed till they were tired, but they admitted that they couldn't open it, and after a while they told the conductor that he might take his safe back again, and start his train down the road. Accordingly, we got the safe into the baggage-car again, and after the train was a mile or two down the road the

conductor he opens her, and there was Jim, as gay as a jay-bird, and laughing himself sick over the failure of the robbers.

"There wasn't any doubt that Jim's scheme had worked well, and the express company gave him fifty dollars as a testimonial of their gratitude for having prevented the robbers from seizing two hundred thousand dollars worth of gold dust. Bimeby, a new idea occurred to Jim. You see, at that time there wasn't any telegraph on this line, and there being only a single track, and that a pretty rough one, accidents were frequent. One day when there was a drove of cattle on the line, and Jim, looking out of the car saw that there was certain to be a smash up, he just opened his safe and gets into it, to wait for better times. That train went off the track, and the baggage car broke loose and went down an embankment, turning over a half-a-dozen times, and going clean to kindling-wood. When we began to clear things up, and missed Jim, we all supposed that he had been smashed, but when the conductor opened the safe to see if the contents were all right, there was Jim as smiling as a basket of chips, and enquiring in a kind of careless way if there was anything the matter with the train. After that, Jim regularly climbed into his safe whenever he heard the danger signal, and he never once got the least scratch or bruise. He went through three collisions in that safe, and after one of them, the safe was buried so deep among the rubbish that it was two days before we could dig it out. That didn't disturb Jim, however. He just took the time out in sleep, and, according to what he said, would have been perfectly contented if he had only been able to smoke his pipe, which he couldn't do owing to the scarcity of air in the safe. You see, as long as he kept his mouth somewhere near the key-hole he managed to do very well, but it wasn't what you could call an airy sort of place.

"Jim was a careful man, and never neglected any precaution that would make the valuables in his charge as safe as possible. This was why he made it a rule to change the combination of the safe every month. About the third day of August—I remember the month, because I always suffer from the liver complaint in August, and I was off duty at the time and riding in the smoking car, being too sick to work as brakesman—we came near running into a waggon that was crossing the track. When Jim heard the brakes blown down, he crawled into his safe and shut the door, expecting there would be an accident. It so happened that the waggon got clear of the track just in

time, and we went on our way rejoicing. After awhile we missed Jim, and, knowing that he must be in his safe, the conductor started to open it. He found that the combination wouldn't work, and then, remembering that it was just after the first of the month, he knew Jim must have changed it and forgotten to give him the new combination. So the conductor gets close to the keyhole and calls to Jim to give him the combination, but Jim answers that he had changed it that very morning but couldn't for the life of him remember what it was.

"Here was a pretty go. The only man who knew the combination had forgot it, and he was shut up in the safe. We told Jim that we would leave him quiet for an hour, and that there wasn't any doubt that he would be able to remember the combination in that time, but somehow when he agreed to this his voice didn't sound very sanguine. At the end of an hour he hadn't made any progress. All he could say was, that the word had something to do either with robbery or politics, and that it must be a word of five letters, that being the way the lock was made.

"Well, we set to work to think of every word in the language relating to robbery and containing five letters. It was like working out some of these puzzles that you see in the Sunday papers, but we couldn't hit on the right answer. Seeing as 'robbery' didn't furnish us with the word, we tried words connected with 'politics,' and if we had only known it, we were on the right track, but we never got there. The conductor sent to his house for a big dictionary, and proposed to begin and try every word of five letters in the whole concern, but after awhile we found that it would take pretty near a year to get through with them all, and by that time Jim wouldn't be wanting to get out.

"We worked at that combination for a good twenty-four hours, taking it altogether, and then we had to give it up. Then we sent for the best safe burglar in the whole North-west, and offered him a hundred dollars to open the safe, giving him leave to try any plan he might prefer. The man had heard of Jim's patent burglar-proof safe, and, being an ambitious chap who took a genuine pride in his profession, he was glad of the job. But he didn't succeed any better than we had done. Picking the lock, guessing at the combination, and working with the jimmy were all failures, and having heard about the experiment that the first gang of train robbers had made on the safe with dynamite, he didn't think it worth while to try that sort of thing a

second time. However, he did say that in his opinion sledge-hammers would open the safe if they were used long enough. So we got two men with big sledge-hammers and set them to hammering the safe hour after hour in the same place, and when they were tired we had two more men to relieve them. We took the safe and the men along with us in the train, and they made such a noise that you could have heard that train a mile away, and would have thought that she was a boiler manufactory on wheels. At the end of twelve hours of steady hammering there wasn't so much as a good-sized dent on that safe, and we gave up sledge-hammers and made up our minds that we had seen the last of Jim,

"For all that we kept tinkering at the combination for a fortnight or more afterwards. Jim had been quiet after the end of the first eight days, and we couldn't get any answer from him. So, seeing as the time had come for to bid farewell to him, we decided that we would take the safe down to the Athensville cemetery and bury it as it stood. Which accordingly was done on the following Sunday, and, seeing as it was well known that safe belonged to Jim, and was empty at the time, except so far as Jim was concerned, there was nobody who had the right to make any objection. The minister who conducted the funeral did say something about the extraordinary nature of the coffin that we had chosen for the deceased, but we told him that the coffin didn't concern him, and that all he had to do was to heave ahead and give it Christian burial without passing any of his remarks. We didn't think it worth while to sink the safe very deep, because some day the combination might be discovered, and then Jim's heirs would want to get the safe out again and put it among Jim's assets, for it would have been sure to fetch a big price if there had been any way of getting into it.

"It must have been a year after the funeral when a passenger got to talking with the conductor of the express in the smoking-car about Jim and his safe, and he accidentally mentioned that the night before Jim shut himself up for the last time they two had been talking politics, and Jim, who was a Democrat, was slinging language about President Hayes, and saying that he had stole the Presidency from Tilden, and was no better than a train robber. When the conductor heard this he swore a while in a thoughtful sort of way, and then he says, 'We've got that combination at last.'

" 'How so?' says the man.



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"THE RELATIVES DUG THE SAFE UP."

" 'Why,' says the conductor, 'Jim allowed that the combination was a word of five letters that had something to do either with robbery or politics. Now "Hayes" would be exactly that sort of word, and I can't think how it happened that we didn't try it. I haven't the least manner of doubt that if we was to dig that safe up and try it with "Hayes" it would open without the least trouble.'

" 'What's the good of opening it after Jim has been occupying it for more than a year?' says the man.

" 'Why, just this,' says the conductor. 'That there safe is the only burglar-proof safe ever built, and if the combination was known the relatives of the remains could sell it for two thousand dollars easy. I'll see them about it to-morrow, and we'll have one more try at opening it.'

" 'Well, to make a long story short, the relatives dug the safe up, and found sure enough that 'Hayes' was the word that unlocked it. It was a little rusty on the outside, but otherwise it was just as good as ever. There wasn't very much left of Jim by that time, but what there was received a second funeral, for there wasn't anything mean about Jim's family, and then the express company bought the safe for eighteen hundred dollars, and it was used on this road for upwards of two years."

" 'What became of it finally?' I asked.

" 'What always becomes of anything or anybody that sticks to railroading too long. The train went off of Three Mile Bridge, about seventy-five miles north of Josephusville, and, there being a quicksand at the bottom of the creek that no man could ever find the bottom of, the whole train—including Jim's safe—sank out of sight, and nobody ever found the least trace of it afterwards. You ought to have heard of that accident, for about three hundred passengers went down with the train, and the company never paid a cent of damages because there were no remains found, and nobody could prove that anybody in particular had been killed. I say it didn't cost the company anything for damages, though they do say that the jurymen cost altogether not far from five thousand dollars a-piece. However, the company got out of it very cheap, and the directors were more disgusted about losing that safe than they were about losing the whole train. Come into my office and I'll show you Jim's photograph standing by his new safe, and making believe to pronounce an oration on its merits. He was a good fellow was Jim, but he put his confidence in that safe once too often."

Twin Bank Holidays !

BY CLEMENT SCOTT.

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

IN private life I never remember my old friend Tom Robertson, the dramatist, to have been so amusing as when dwelling on the autocracy of the ship's captain. Loving his "Captain Marryat" as he did, saturated as he was in the humour of "Peter Simple" and "Mr. Midshipman Easy," Robertson always maintained that the captain of a vessel at sea had more power, more absolute authority, than a thousand Czars and Emperors rolled into one.

For instance, said he, "We are on board ship, and the time has come at midday for taking the sun. One of the ship's officers arrives on deck with a 'dumpey leveller.' He walks to and fro anxious and irritated. He dodges the flying clouds. He rushes from one side of the deck to the other. He looks as if he intended to 'Kodak' the universe. All at once he clips creation. The deed is accomplished. Hat in hand the first or second officer, as the case may be, approaches the captain. 'Well, what is it?' 'Please, sir,' insinuates the scientific officer, 'it is twelve o'clock.' 'Well,' replies the captain, 'make it so.' Now," observed Robertson, when he was describing this scene, which we all know so well, "here is autocracy sublimated. There is an air and tone of the first chapter of Genesis in that 'make it so.' No power on earth save the ship's captain could 'make it twelve o'clock' on his absolute will and authority. Greenwich would be aghast and the Astronomer Royal would tear his hair if any sane individual dared to 'make it twelve o'clock' except on the authority of the charts and calendars." I was thinking of Robertson's chuckle over the omniscient

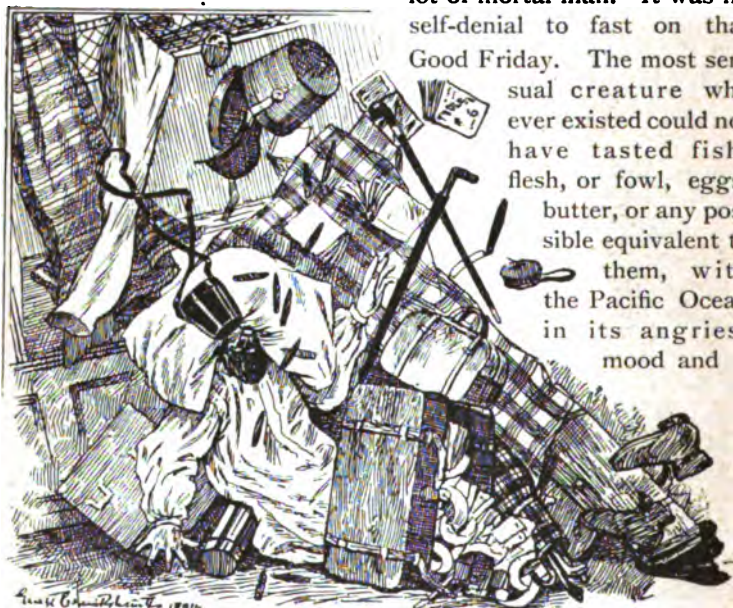


THE LATE TOM ROBERTSON.

captain of the mercantile marine on my journey from Japan to San Francisco. Now the captain of the Pacific Mail Steam Company's good ship *China* is the best of good fellows. He ought not to be called Seabury, but Seaworthy. He is a man not to be trifled with, a genial friend, a hale companion, a strict disciplinarian. He would put his best friend in irons if he dared to dispute his authority or to thwart his views on any offered point. But I had no idea that even the excellent Captain Seabury possessed the power that was proved to be vested in him. How little does the outside world know of its greatest men.

We were on board ship at Easter time. Indeed, we spent on board the *China* probably the most ghastly Good Friday and the most intensely disagreeable Easter Day that ever fell to the

lot of mortal man. It was no self-denial to fast on that Good Friday. The most sensual creature who ever existed could not have tasted fish, flesh, or fowl, eggs, butter, or any possible equivalent to them, with the Pacific Ocean in its angriest mood and a



"ROLLING LIKE A TEE-TO-TUM UPON THE BEASTLY BILLOWS."

ship rolling like a tee-to-tum upon the beastly billows. Sometimes a ship follows the sea. Sometimes the sea follows the ship. But in this instance the *China* appeared to me to skate along the ridge of a wave, and then to duck first to one side and then to the other in order not to give any unfair or undue

advantage to those who were cabined on the port or starboard sides of the vessel.

We all got it alike. First we went under on one side, then on the other. But if Good Friday was a trial to anyone who possessed a millionth part of the patience of Job, Easter Day was infinitely worse. We had no "sun upon this Easter Day," and any poet would have been shocked at the Paschal sight that greeted us! But we had a pile of snow and sleet on the promenade deck, and no sun on earth or sea to melt it. If I had placed a copy of Sir John Suckling in my portmanteau I should have flung it overboard in disgust. All had gone wrong. Japan was in the throes of influenza. Everyone was sick and "roopy," and there was no suspicion of an Easter sun to cheer our spirits and clear our bronchial tubes.

It is said that dire misfortune follows anyone who does not put on new clothes on Easter Day. I fear, then, that bad luck will pursue me whilst the year lasts, for my Easter Day was spent in a dark and comfortless bunk trying to fight the portmanteaus and dressing-bags and hat-boxes that careered wildly round my miserable cabin. You have no idea what pranks your personal impedimenta can play you when a vessel rolls at sea. You think that your goods and chattels are safely deposited under the bunks there to remain until required and called upon. Safe! not a bit of it. When the ship rolls, out slides a portmanteau, which is promptly met by a careering cabin trunk. They are joined in their midnight or midday revels by bed-ladders or camp-stools, of whose existence you had never dreamed, and they all take to sliding and slithering backwards and forwards over the floor, which in a few hours looks like the wreck of a house after a bombardment. But that is not all. When the vessel has first rolled to one side, and then recovered itself with a wild lurch to the other, then comes a ghastly shake and horrible tremor occasioned by the "screw" leaping out of the water. Then it is that the bottles and the glasses begin to dance. A general smash causes cold water, hair wash, and perfumery to join in the general fandango, the result being too horrible to mention, trying to the nerves, temper, and fortitude alike.

Having endured a Good Friday and an Easter Day of that particular pattern, judge of our astonishment when on Bank Holiday our captain presented himself at table and coolly informed us that he had the power—nay, indeed, he was com-

pelled by Providence and the natural laws on the high seas, to present us with an extra day to our lives that very week. Yes, it was quite true. We were going from Japan to 'Frisco, and passengers so afflicted had the privilege of living one day longer than the rest of the world. If we had been returning from 'Frisco to Japan we might, it is true, be deprived of one day of existence, which would not be quite so cheerful, but as it was, this autocratic but very delightful captain was actually empowered to grant me one more day of life than is usually



"BUT THAT IS NOT ALL!"

awarded to my fellow-creatures. So far as I was concerned, the gift of an extra day's life to be spent on the Pacific Ocean came at the most unfortunate time. But then we are never satisfied. If I could have shortened my life on this earth by a fortnight or three weeks I would have gladly done it on that memorable journey. I had particular and private reasons for desiring to arrive at 'Frisco quicker than the telegraph wire could flash a message. No sea-gull could have wished to fly swifter than my heart did on that occasion. If I could have

gone to bed at Yokohama and awakened next day at 'Frisco, the time, according to my calculation, would have been far too long. It seemed to be an eternity watching across the waste of troubled waters for the glimmer and gleam of the Golden Gate ! Time at this moment of my journey was absolutely wearisome.

And yet this was the very hour when the Captain of the good ship *China* whispered in my ear that he desired, nay, that he was empowered, to add one whole day to my natural life. What a predicament ! Nay, what a Mephistopheles of a Captain ! What moments there are in one's life when you would give your head, your ears, nay, your whole existence, for twenty-four more hours' arrest of cruel Time, when you would go down on

— your knees and not only say with Wilfred Denver, "Oh God, put back thy Universe, and give me yesterday," but "Arrest, O God, thy Time, and make it still to-day." But here was the Captain of the Pacific Mail empowered and authorised to give me an extra day's life exactly at the moment when I did not want it. It was of no use protesting, or arguing or bargaining with this obdurate and most official Captain. It was of little good to say "some other time," or suggesting



Gray Crumple 1894 "IF I COULD HAVE GONE TO BED AT YOKOHAMA, AND AWAKENED NEXT DAY AT 'FRISCO."

that I would readily take twelve hours in a month's time for twenty-four hours on the spot. That was not the point at all. Here was the extra day's life to take now, whether I liked it or not, and the worst of it was it could not be left on my plate. I was not to be allowed to go off that particular ship before I had deliberately swallowed and bolted a day's life that I did not ask for or desire to enjoy. The Captain was deaf to all entreaties. He put the matter to us all in the most practical form. "Well, gentlemen ! how will you have it ?"

He was like a nautical cashier dealing out change to his wretched crew.

He was particularly anxious that we should decide if we would have two Easter Sundays or two Bank Holidays in this present year ! Forgetful of the horrors of the Easter day I have described, with its snow and sea-storms, and its battle with wandering trunks and hat-boxes, I rashly suggested two Easter Days. I remembered what bets I might win at home if I wagered on the wonderful occasion in my lifetime when two Easter Days came together, and what fierce discussion would arise in consequence. How I should be contradicted flat to my face, "Impossible, my dear fellow ! Study the Golden Calendar in your Prayer Book. I assure you the thing cannot be done. It is mathematically and chronologically impossible." - And then I thought I would be more greedy and frolicsome than devo-



tional, and have two Bank Holidays instead. They were, it is true, Bank Holidays in imagination, no Crystal Palace, Hampstead Heath, or Richmond Park Bank Holidays ; but useless, hopeless, uninteresting Bank Holidays, spent without love or amusement on the bosom of the Pacific Ocean. Still it was of no use to argue any more about the matter. I was bound to live a day more than I cared for that week whether I wanted it or not. The autocratic Captain had decreed it. I was at sea, "in prison," as Dr. Johnson observed, "with the chance of being drowned." If I resisted the Captain's authority and his gift of life, I should, in all probability, be at once put in irons or reduced to a moral pulp by nautical discipline. No tears or shrieks on my part would get me one hour nearer to that haven of refuge and delight, the Golden Gate of San Francisco. It

seemed to me like an acted nightmare. With me nightmares always hold you morally by the legs. You want to catch a train, and become paralysed. You want to kiss a pretty girl, and your lips are pulseless. You want to dance with a divine being, and just as you are starting, with your arms round her waist, you find that on your gliding feet are spiked cricket shoes. What, then, if this Pacific nightmare were to endure for evermore, and eventually to madden me ! At the Golden Gate awaited me the dearest treasure on earth. Here was to be my Paradise ! What if this life-giving Captain were to say at Honolulu, "Look here, I am empowered to give you one more week's life !" And what if, when we sighted 'Frisco, he gave me another fortnight in which to repent my sins. The thought maddened me. At this rate I should never arrive at the Golden Gate, and still I should live for ever. Claudian and the Wandering Jew would never even in combination suffer such acute torture. But for all that I was compelled against my will to spend two Bank Holidays on the Pacific Ocean. They gave me a week with eight days in it, and I did not want an extra second. Think of the waste of good material. At home how the working man would have revelled in my discarded luxury and extended indefinitely his libations. Think how the lovers on their honeymoon would enjoy an extra twenty-four hours of bliss. Selfish as I was, I cursed my fate on this occasion to be compelled to live a day longer than I asked for. But then we are never satisfied, are we ?

Amongst the earliest recollections in my mind concerning my old friend, Henry Irving, is one of a young man, tall, slim, and with a very earnest face, sitting down at the piano at the house of Charles Mathews, in Pelham Crescent, Brompton. Yes, Henry Irving could sing and accompany himself very prettily indeed. His favourite song, or rather the ditty which we always demanded, was a ballad by Planché out of an old



"WHILE CUTTING TEETH AND LIVING
UPON SUCTION."

burlesque once played at the Princess's Theatre, called "Love and Fortune." The "Chanson de Fortunio" on this occasion

was a pretty but passionate poem, implying that with all the ills and cares of life a man might live till eighty years, and still could honestly say that "he had

not lived a day." What with childish ills, boyhood's ills, manhood's cares, the misery of old age, the burden of the romance was that this miserable individual had "reached" four score but had not lived a day.



Amplified 1874

"TOOTH, OR OTHER ACHES."

This song of Planché is so pretty that it is well worth quoting :—

"Three score and ten, by common
calculation,
The years of man amount to ; but
we'll say
He turns four score, yet, in my esti-
mation,
In all those years he has not lived
a day.

"Out of the eighty, you must first
remember
The hours of night you pass
asleep in bed,
And, counting from December to
December,
Just half your life you'll find you
have been dead.



Amplified

1874

"YOUR FORTUNE YOU'VE TO MAKE."

"To forty years at once, by this reduction,
We come ; and sure the first five from your birth
While cutting teeth and living upon suction,
You're not alive to what this life is worth !

"From thirty-five next take for education,
Fifteen at least at college and at school,
When, notwithstanding all your application,
The chances are you may turn out a fool.

"Still twenty you have left us to dispose of,
But during them your fortune you've to make,
And granting with the luck of some one knows of,
'Tis made in ten—that's ten from life to take.



"SANS EYES, SANS TEETH."

Howe Brothers 1894

"Out of the ten yet left you must allow for
The time for shaving, tooth, or other aches.
Say four, and that leaves six, too short, I vow, for
Regretting past and making fresh mistakes !

"Meanwhile each hour dispels some fond illusion,
Until, at length, sans eyes, sans teeth, you may
Have scarcely sense to come to this conclusion,
You've reached four score—but haven't lived a day !"

It is not likely that I shall ever reach four score years or anything like it. But if it be so decreed that the allotted life of the Psalmist shall be so exceeded in my case, at any rate, I can say that I have lived one day longer than any living octogenarian, except he was on board the *China* on the Pacific Ocean in April, 1893.

The Flittermouse.

BY ANGUS EVAN ABBOTT.

ILLUSTRATED BY G. L. HARRISON.

EVEN the most savage of beings, not that Bulstrode the Highwayman leader could with justice be described as such, have a reverence, or it may be better described as a superstitious awe, for those folk, poets, players on the flute, and such-like, to whom Providence has entrusted but half the right number of wits. The half-daft, but an acute form of the eccentric, have been in all ages treated with a considerate gentleness which denotes a pity inborn for those who by nature have been deprived of the fitness to battle with the world, or to realise, as all rational beings must, that we fight a hopeless fight. In the turmoil of war, as in the days of peace, the half-witted pass to and fro unmolested by friend and foe alike. Indeed, such an one, blessed with the desire to be abroad at odd hours and in strange places, his is a picturesque figure in the country-side, and in a manner knits together high and low, the rich and the poor, in a common bond of sympathy and care.

But to an honest highwayman, obliged to ride when witches take to their brooms, and when the winds swing the hopeless hanging bodies like a pendulum athwart the angry sky, and play a fretful tune on the chains, it was a distress of spirit to come suddenly and in an unexpected place upon one whose intellect was blind. Bulstrode, after the second fright of the kind, seriously thought of quitting the moor for ever.

Bulstrode named him the Flittermouse. Often in the amber dusk of an autumn evening a solitary figure might be espied making an erratic way among the furze, or, like a scout on the plains, standing silent and lonely on some raised piece of ground, gazing away into space. This was the Flittermouse in search of the will-o'-the-wisp that danced in the vacant places of his own brain. And many a time Farmer Haddon, homeward bound from market and in the middle of a bawling song, was startled into quietness by the form of the daft man emerging from the bushes by the way, and slowly crossing the highway under the very nose of the affrighted horses, head bared to the



"IN THE CHURCHYARD."

night winds and eyes gazing at the stars. Had the Flittermouse been a woman and old, he would long ago have ceased to roam the moor. But he was a young man, stalwart of build, with shaggy head and wistful eyes, and he interfered with no one; but when he met with children alone, he gave them wild flowers to stick in their hair, and pointed out to them the very spot where he had last beheld the Fairy Queen dancing in the moonlight. He talked with ghosts among the gravestones, and had been heard by Mássy, the cobbler, on the night of the



"STARTLED BY THE DAFT MAN."

great storm, to upbraid the wicked witches as they goaded the wind to destruction.

Unfortunately witches were not the only enemies the Flittermouse had made in his wanderings. Old Fenn, the gravedigger, for some years had looked askance at his half-witted neighbour, and all honest people must agree that he was able and willing to give good reasons for his objections to the doings of the Flittermouse. Once or twice the gravedigger broached the subject to the Vicar, without, however, obtaining much satisfaction. But as time went on without any perceptible improvement in the habits of the Flittermouse—in fact, matters grew

worse instead of better—Fenn felt it to be his duty to enter a solemn and vigorous protest.

"I tell 'e," he said to the Vicar, bringing his fist with a smack into the palm of his hand. "I tell 'e the burials be goin' to the daags ower the head o' the loonie. But four holes to fill in a twalmonth, setting aside the Lonnon man kilt by the Ramps, and the corpse pickt out o' Spook Pool, neither o' them the rightful property o' the parish."

"I must say I do not see how we can hold the Flittermouse responsible for the number of deaths more or less in the parish," protested the Vicar.

"'Tis as plain as a cadger's feet in the stocks! Folks be afeared to die. Look at old Mother Foster! She should ha' gone last Martimas or afore if all was right. But no! They dawdle and shuffle and snuffle on to the undoing o' gravediggers. Afraid o' the loonie, and his interfering wi' them! There's no' a night in the year that he bees not laughin' and hauntin' the yard—afeard o' the Flittermouse and his oaf-wanderings about the yard o' nights."

But from some recondite reason the gravedigger could not convince the Vicar that the Flittermouse ought to be shut up to prevent his ramblings abroad, and kept where he might, by standing on his toes, catch a glimpse of the great moor outside and the stars. So the gravedigger seized his stout stick and hobbled away home, muttering vengeance on the Flittermouse at every step.

His mind was made up. The parish graveyard must not be ruined, the Vicar's apathy notwithstanding. He would take the matter into his own strong hands.

"This very night," he muttered to himself, as he made his way homeward, "this very night it must be done, or hang me for a sheep-



"CUT FIVE OR SIX CUDGELS."

lifter." On his way he cut five or six cudgels stout enough to administer a lusty blow, yet not so heavy as to run the danger of breaking bones. He knew of five good fellows who, for a pot of ale and his friendship, would be willing to accompany him to the churchyard and render him assistance in the administration of justice, should he require any. After dark they would repair to the porch of the old church, and Fenn the gravedigger had no fear that he would not be able to crack the Flittermouse's head to some purpose.

It is the man with plenty of flesh on his bones that risks a fall, and he that has money can afford to play the fool. The shrewd leadership of Bulstrode, the chief of the highwaymen, had filled the coffers of the outlaw band. As money was plentiful—highwaymen never look far ahead—the band decided to take matters gently for a time, to allow the coaches to roll past unmolested, and to collect no gravel-tax from solitary horsemen on their way across the common. When Bulstrode came to this decision, two or three of the younger men, with the true nomadic blood in their veins, unwilling to remain supine for even a few days, shook hands all round, mounted their beasts, and rode away to be heard of no more. But the others settled down to a season of drinking, feasting, and cock-fighting, or paid surreptitious visits to the neighbouring villages to play pranks on the slow-witted inhabitants, and to ride home across the moor in the early hours of the morning, howling songs at the top of their voices.

This pleasant state of things had lasted for more than a week when the gravedigger came to his determination to rid the churchyard of its half-witted visitor. It so happened on the evening of that day the full force of the highwaymen were seated drinking in the loft of the "Raven" Inn, talking of the past and of the future. Whether it was the eerie fluttering notes of a flautist that turned their thoughts to the supernatural, or maybe the rich wine they drank—for wine is inspired of all things magic—or whether it was the mere accidental drift of the conversation to ghosts and witches, it is impossible to tell, but certain it is that the men one by one began to think and then to talk of things preternatural. It is typical of a man's nature, this fear of ghosts. He searches after a soul of his own, he trusts and then believes he has one, and shapes his steps so that this spirit may live for ever; and all the time he fears to

think of its separate existence, and the glimpse of a ghost strikes terror into the bravest heart. But there are some who actually believe in the existence of their own spirit, and yet obstinately refuse to believe in the existence of ghosts. Such an one was Rube Haybittle. He had the effrontery to maintain, in the face of evidence forthcoming, that there were no such things as ghosts.

"Witches, I grant ye, and fairies there may be, but ghosts? Rubbish!" Rube declared to the group around him, regardless of the consequences such rank heresy was likely to bring upon his head. "'Tis only those folks wi' pure consciences that uphold a belief in ghosts, and who durst not pass a burial ground for fear o' them. Pure consciences I ha' found are like colts, they shy at every shadow."

This brought forth a reply from Stevers, a learned man and Bulstrode's trusted lieutenant.

"I have noticed that those who cry loudest about the non-existence of ghosts always make it convenient to pass a graveyard before dark, not after," he said.

"Graveyards! When ha' I been afeared to pass a graveyard night or day? Answer me that," demanded Haybittle, growing excited.

"Never when there was anything to drink t'other side," shouted Gosnell. Haybittle turned a withering glance on the rubicund speaker, and when the guffaw subsided, said cuttingly:

"Gosnell, ye're *very* clever and *very* drunk." Turning to Stevers he continued, "You've stopped everything that walks the road on two legs, from a sparrow to a knight."

"An earl," Stevers interrupted, for he was proud of having robbed the Earl of Hollovale of close upon a hundred guineas.

"An earl, then, to please ye," continued Haybittle. "Tell, tell me this: did ye ever stop a ghost?"

"No money in it," answered Stevers.

"No money in it. For why is there no money in it? How know ye there's no money on a ghost? I'll warrant ye there's as much gold as ghost to any o' them. Ghosts do not go about naked, do they? If they be clad, it must o' reason be in ghost clothes, and if ghost clothes, why not ghost money. Answer me that now. Ye'll find that a stickler. That's a cock that will fight!"

"Ghost money is no good to me," answered Stevers.

"No, nor's ghosts any good to ye," laughed Haybittle,

seeing he had quite the best of the argument and rubbing his hands in glee. "I'll own they ha' their purposes, keeping old women from gossiping up and down the land when they should be in their beds or mending their good man his sark; they ha' their purposes, but no existence."

"Oh, look ye here," Gosnell spoke up, "hang me if the churchyard across the common there be not full of ghosts as the ivy is o' howlets. You're not the man, Rube, to enter the very gate after twelve-o'-the-clock."

"Pooh! Twal'-o'-the-clock. I'd enter it thirteen-o'-the-clock or any other o'-the-clock. I'd sit on a grave an hour and undertake not to hum a tune, nor to cross myself, nor to drum my toes on the turf, but only to sit and listen, and no man can do eerier than that. Say what ye want, and lay me a wager if you durst."

A wager was a material foundation to what had seemed likely to be nothing more than an academic discussion of a metaphysical problem, and at the mention of money those who had hitherto listened listlessly to the dispute, started to their feet to crane over the shoulders of the principals to the wager. Rube Haybittle sat back, his head erect, arms folded, and a look of mighty importance on his face, and took no further part in the arrangements than nodding approval to every step of the plan. It was soon arranged that the unbeliever should journey to the graveyard alone. Once there, he was to tie the end of a ball of worsted yarn to a branch of the ivy and walk in and out among the gravestones, and continue to do so until all the yarn had been spun. In the morning the spot would be visited by a deputation of four, and if they found the yarn to be honestly used around and about the headstones, Haybittle should be declared the winner of the wager. But now a difficulty arose. Not a yard of worsted could be found in the whole Inn. This hitch in the arrangement, at first likely to prove the ruin of the scheme, was finally overcome by the suggestion that Shortie Flint should ride with Rube as far as weaver Jenks and assist the ghost-hunter to steal sufficient yarn for the occasion.

No sooner had Rube and Shortie headed their horses in the direction of the weaver's cottage, than Stevers, the life of the gang in all things mischievous, shouted to those left behind:

"Now men, up with you and on with your cloaks."

"What are you going to do?" enquired one who felt comfortable where he sat.

"Do, man! There's but one thing to do. Do you think ghosts will help us win our wager? No fear. We must be our own ghosts to-night. We'll show Rube spooks, and more kinds of spooks than he ever dreamed of."

Bulstrode, stretched out comfortably in an arm-chair, had paid small heed to the wrangle and wager, but confined his energies to the emptying of a tankard that stood by his elbow; but he now sat up and looked at Stevers for some moments before saying:

"I'm as ready for a hard ride and a long wait as any o' ye, but I do it in the way o' business. Let Rube weave his foolwoof. The night air will sober him, and if he gets his head cracked by a shuttle from the weaver, the better for him. But the rest o' ye, are ye no comfortable where ye be, that ye go scurrying like a pack o' village dogs on a fool's errand, or loup-ing like frogs among the gravestones?"

"Would you have us sit here till we're so fat we cannot mount a horse?" asked Stevers, goodnaturedly. "Our rule is that when there's no business we play, and when there's business, no play. Sheets for every one of us," he shouted to the low-browed keeper of the place, "and white as you have 'em. Bulstrode, you must come along with us."

"Devil a fear devil a foot will I put one afore the other," Bulstrode replied; "Rube is like to break some o' your thick skulls afore he leaves the yard. He'll no mistake a Raven Inn sheet for a celestial robe, drunk and all as he may be. If you're set on going, go. I stay here. 'Tis more comfortable than crouching behind a gravestone, I ha' small doubt."

"Oh, come now, Bulstrode," coaxed Stevers. "When you call on us to follow you to a coach, where there's a surety of pistols going off, and maybe a swinging in chains for breakfast at daylight, do we hold back? When Bulstrode cries 'Forward,' do not we go forward?"

"Aye, too forward, most times," Bulstrode interrupted.

"Do we hold back and cry 'no, let's drink?'" continued Stevers, unheeding the interruption, "and now that we call upon you to join us in our sports, as we join you in your dangers, we think that you should follow us as you intend later on to lead."

This speech, delivered in the best of good humour, was followed by a roar of applause and banging of tankards on the oak table, and Bulstrode bowed to the inevitable.

"Well, men," he said, slowly rising, "albeit I ha' small

stomach for interference wi' ghosts, be there any or be there none, if you're determined —" he broke off his sentence to roar to the men-of-all-work. "Ho! my boots, and saddle my mare."

The inn, from a drab, drowsy, drinking place, was instantly all bustle and light. Beds were flung on the floor, to be harried of their sheets and blankets, pillows stripped for head-gear, horses were champing and stamping at the door. When each man had a sheet tucked under his arm one was passed, to Bulstrode, but that worthy shook his head.

"I'll be ghost soon eno' ower the head o' ye all, without fore-



"HORSES WERE CHAMPING AND STAMPING AT THE DOOR."

stalling the day," he said. "I'll but look on and let the rest o' ye, who are younger and crazier, play leapfrog over the stones."

So out they set, and, heading south, made away over the moor as fast as the capricious light would permit. The wind blew fresh across the great stretch of open country, and above the light clouds, like sheep following their leader, across the sky, obscuring for the most part the full moon, now high in the heavens. Occasionally a break in the procession of clouds allowed the moon to fill the earth with a flood of watery light, that peopled the wide moor with strange and contorted shadows. A night for ghosts and witches. At last the square tower of the old church loomed indistinctly in the darkness, and at the sight of it the horsemen wheeled out upon the moor again, and,

riding, into a clump of bushes, left their horses in charge of the ostler from the inn, and made for the paling at the rear of the churchyard. Bulstrode, leading his horse—for he had no intention of entering the sacred ground—followed the others as far as the palings, and saw them vault one by one over, and disappear among the gravestones, each according to the directions he had received from Stevers. The clouds were thick between the earth and the moon, but Bulstrode caught a glimpse now and again of a flutter of white away in the dark, as the men shook free their sheets, and prepared to make themselves comfortable for what might prove to be a long watch. Left to his own thoughts, Bulstrode admitted to himself that he did not like the part he was playing. “Neither saint nor sinner,” he muttered, and, placing his arms along the paling, he waited what might befall. Before him the rows of white stones, like ivory pawns, guarded the great grey king that towered in the murk of night. An owl hooted from the belfry; away to the right a night-bird answered with a sad cry, the wind moaned through the elms that grew near at hand, and down in a hollow a fox barked, a short and peevish bark. Bulstrode wished to heaven he was seated comfortably in the cosy parlour of the Raven Inn, and thanked heaven he had brought his beast with him for company.

Bulstrode, by nature, was given to no abstruse ponderings. He was a matter-of-fact man, but the most unromantic natures have at least a grain of superstition to leaven the mass of materialism; and as the leader of the highwaymen gazed into the dark, his chin on his arms, he began to think of all the unhallowed tales he had ever heard in his life, so at last it seemed to him, and reason as he might, his mind refused to leave the bloodthirsty stories of his youth, but continued to croon them over and over again, with every ghastly detail included. The more he strove to dispel the vision the often “Limber Lincoln” stabbed the “wee baby” before his very eyes. And as the moments crawled past he thought he caught sight, out of the corner of his eye, of a gravestone changing places with its neighbour. A little later another skipped away, and then another, and another, till at last the lot of them began to dance a heathenish dance, while the skull on the stone nearest to him fiddled a silent tune with its crossbones, leering all the while up into his face. The worthy highwayman felt that it was time to pull himself together.

But good wine builds a palace and makes a bed anywhere, so be that you take enough of it. At the end of the first half hour most of the highwaymen, wrapped in sheets, were snoring soundly, their heads against the stones and their legs tucked comfortably under them. It was the click of the gate that first wakened them from their dreams, and for some moments the soberest of them could not make out where he was ; but at the sight of the gravestones and the church beyond they all tucked their sheets closer round them—glad of the extra warmth—and peered through the darkness in the direction from whence the sound came. A few moments later their inquisitiveness was rewarded by the sight of a man walking up the gravel path. He strode forward with unnatural deliberation and erectness, and dug his heels savagely into the gravel, in a manner that betokened a determination to at least attempt to make himself believe that he was not at all frightened. Walking in the direction of the ivy he disappeared from sight in the deep shadow that clung to the side of the old stone church. The ghosts had arranged that when Rube Haybittle struck out among the graves, first one and then each of the others in his turn was to start up, flutter his sheet, and leap over the stone nearest to him, at the same time setting up a demoniac laugh. This Stevers was preparing to do when, peeping from behind the stone to make himself aware of the proper moment to begin his tomfoolery, he was astounded to see the door of the porch open silently and a figure slip out, and on tip-toe make its way towards the ivy where Rube was still busy fumbling to attach the yarn. Before Stevers rightly caught his breath, there came the sound of a lusty "thwack," followed by an appalling howl of pain and fright, repeated again and again. The ghosts stood horror-stricken. Again and again the thwacks sounded, the blows apparently delivered in a shower, and the next thing Stevers saw was the figures of two men whirling out of the shadow in tight embrace. Round and round they spun—it might be for two minutes or more, then ceased ; and there arose on the night air the gruesome sound of strangling. Stevers could stand it no longer. Calling to his men to come on to Rube's assistance, he bounded in the direction of the fight. Before they reached the spot the moon broke through the clouds and revealed Rube Haybittle, his hands tightly clasped on the throat of the sturdy old gravedigger, choking the breath out of his body. At the same moment Rube caught a sight of the half-

dozen ghosts leaping the headstones one after the other in his direction, their shrouds fluttering in the night wind. Poor Rube's disbelief in ghosts was not so firmly rooted as to carry him through such a trial. His jaw dropped, his hair stood on end, and his hands relaxed their hold on the throat of his antagonist, and with a mad cry of fear he bounded down the gravel path and was gone. But with the disappearance from the boards of the principal actor, the excitement was far from over. No sooner did the gravedigger catch his breath than he shouted



“FACE TO FACE WITH THE FLITTERMOUSE.”

a signal, and out from the porch where they had been in hiding came half-a-dozen rustics bent on administering a sound beating to the Flittermouse. Before they knew where they were they found themselves in the very centre of the shivering ghosts. Which party was the more astounded—the rustics or the ghosts—there is no telling, but the rustics had the means of making their astonishment sorely inconvenient to the ghosts. Shouting at the top of their voices from fear and horror, the gravedigger's men laid about them with their cudgels, administering blow

after blow with all the strength and agony of fear. And now followed a general panic. Rustics, gravedigger, and ghosts—every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost. Sheets flew off, and hats were hurled away. Over the graves they tore like folk insane, and those who fell scrambled along on their hands and knees in too great a hurry to take the time to get on their legs again.

The first sound to reach Bulstrode's ear was Haybittle's unearthly cry when the gravedigger, mistaking Rube for the Flittermouse, brought the cudgel across the highwayman's shoulders. This cry, breaking so unexpectedly on the night air, gave Bulstrode such a shock as he had not experienced for many a long day, and unstrung his nerves at the very outset. Standing tip-toe he peered into the darkness, but, owing to his distance from the scene of action and the blackness of the night, he found himself unable to make head or tail of the hubbub. That something uncanny was happening he felt in his bones, and the chills hunted one another up his spine and spread out under his scalp till the roots of each particular hair curled and wriggled on his brain. When at last the moon shone brightly on the graveyard, Bulstrode caught a dim glimpse of a cluster of figures struggling by the side of the church; and as the din increased, pierced each moment by a louder and more horror-stricken cry, every nerve in Bulstrode's body tingled and twitched until he was sore all over. At the very instant the clamour reached its height, and when Bulstrode was on the point of mounting his mare to get away from the haunted spot, he heard right behind him a low guttural laugh. Springing wildly around, the leader of the highwaymen found himself face to face with the Flittermouse. The moonlight danced and rippled upon the features of the daft man, his eyes were opened wide, and a grin wrinkled his cheeks and his chin. Bulstrode's heart stopped beating. As the two stood facing each other, the daft man ran his fingers through his tangled hair, and, taking from its warm bed a poor blind field-mouse, he held it kindly towards the highwayman, nodding his head and making strange noises with his lips. The very blood froze in Bulstrode's veins. With a gasp of horror and a wild spring he was into his saddle, and digging the spurs into the mare's sides, sprung out upon the moor as though the devil himself were after him.

The Flittermouse did not take the trouble to watch the horseman out of sight. He put the tiny mouse back into its warm

nest, and, vaulting over the paling, began his nightly walk through the graveyard in solitude and in peace. At last, noticing a sheet that fluttered to a headstone, he took it in his arms and carefully folded it, saying, as he placed it at the head of the grave, "Poor ghost; he has lost his shroud." Then he sat him down on a mound, his face to the east, to await, as was his wont, the break of day.



"SPRANG OUT UPON THE MOOR."

The Doctor of the "Southern Cross."

BY HARRY LANDER.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY SEPPINGS WRIGHT.



"LA GRIPPE."

LA GRIPPE had laid its icy hand upon the skipper, and the old "hooker," aboard which we had spent so many happy hours, had both anchors down, and three turns in the cables. We found him shivering in his berth, with two bottles of whisky within reach, and a stray kitten for company.

"Cast off, you imp, cast off," he growled, as the kitten, having crept stealthily over the blankets, made a sudden leap and buried its claws in his great brown fist. His long brawny arm shot out in ineffectual pursuit as it sprang back, quivering with the joy of the chase. "Heave to, while I bring the guns to bear," he cried gleefully, as two black ears and a pair of excited eyes appeared above his feet, where an excited tail waved defiance. The battery poured forth a pair of socks, three corks, and a piece of tobacco, through which broadside the kitten made another rush.

"Try to board me, would you?" he growled. We laughed as his hairy paw descended upon the wriggling black ball of hair and claws, for the grim old sea dog played with that kitten like a girl in her teens.

"Well, Carling, how goes it?"

"God above only knows, sir," he replied, with alarming devoutness. To play with a kitten instead of tease it was a sign of severe prostration, but resignation When such men speak seriously of a God the Angel of Death is at their elbow. Whisky was promptly administered.

"What is the matter, and why did you not send to us before?"

"Well, sir, I dunno. Three days I've been struck flat a-back furrard, shuddering under ten blankets and a hair bed like a

expedition to the North Pole. I've had fever of every colour in a rainbow, collarer, scurvy, smallpox, and various fancy turns. I've been frostbit and sunstroked, but sick list or fit, at home or abroad, I could always lift my weight somehow. Now I can barely lift that cat. Why, 'bacca don't taste, the boy blubs all day, and leaving alone him and that black imp, there ain't a soul as cares about me. I'll be euchred. I've played my right and left bowers"—he indicated the bottles of whisky by a mournful nod of his head—"but old Nick's got the bennie this time, and he'll euchre me."

"Nonsense," cried George, punching his chest, "you're salted inside and out, and won't go on a grating this time. The moment the boy returns he must fetch a doctor."

"Doctors," cried he derisively, "I know them. In the Sarvice they can patch up broken heads and limbs, clean a man out after long leave at Pomby, or certificate him unfit. Out of the Sarvice some read books all the voyage, but most loaf round the wimmin. There was only one doc. as I ever see of much account in a ship."

"Then where is he to be found?"

"Down in the South Atlantic, a thousand fathoms deep. Poor gentleman, he was a man."

"Light a cigar and tell us about him," I said, handing him some of a special Blanco Chapello brand, rank enough to cauterize a dead man's palate.



"A REAL GOOD CIGAR."

"Thank you, sir, but smokes is wasted upon me," he said, lighting one and puffing it mournfully. Then, with sudden pleasure, he exclaimed, "Why I can feel it right up behind my eyes. This is a real good cigar, sir."

"Indeed, that is a sign you are getting better, but you may as well spin us another yarn."

"As to that doc., sir and Mr. George?" Then, curling himself comfortably among the blankets, he fixed the cigar between his teeth, and commenced with unusual earnestness. "As you may have read, sir, there is niggers what believes souls, what's in a man, is used again and again. It don't seem Bible regelashun to me, not knowing how them niggers figure it out. Anyway, if it's true, God-a-mighty shipped a soul of the right sort aboard that

doctor. A sound, oak-built, copper-sheathed soul, pleasant and easy in fair weather, gay and frisky like with the spinaker set, but stiff and as safe as a house to punch through a gale of trouble with three reefs down and the storm-jib set. This ain't according to Bible regelashuns, and pious chaps 'ud pull long faces, but that's my reckining of a good soul, what same I take to be a kinder pilot as a chap ships as he leaves dock as a nipper. Them niggers likewise reckon beasts have souls.

. . . Come here, you imp of the devil's, and sling your hammick alongside your messmate."

Picking up the sleeping kitten he placed it beneath the blankets, with its head just beneath his chin.

"I was a quartermaster aboard the steamer 'Southern Cross.' I'd just left the Sarvice, and thought no small spuds of myself among them

freight-breakers what call 'emselves sailor men. But I learnt something from them. To the Brazils and the Plate River and back like a railway train was our run. I like change, but I shipped for my third trip and got it. That doc. was a slight chap, with gray eyes and a fair moustache what stuck out like a sojer's. A pleasant gentleman, who 'ud sing finely in the saloon and say a kind word to a man likewise. He kinder fancied me, me being his first job. A man can't be too careful in stowing his drink, sir and Mr. George. You see, having shipped a month's rations in an hour all of a hurry, I had 'em bad. Me and my chum Sam, a big buck nigger, likewise a quartermaster, cleared out that fo'c'stle in a couple of tacks. Old Pipes knocked me down as I was going about on a third board. . . . That doc. spoke kind to me, and that's why I never drink more than a bottle of whisky at a go now. So when he came on deck of a morning it was, 'Good morning, big man'—I was the biggest man aboard, sir—and I'd give him the Sarvice salute and say, 'Mornin', sir.' "

For a full minute he puffed the cigar in reflective silence, then continued, with gravity worthy the topic: "Wimmin, sir, as you may have seen, is various; same as yachts—good, bad, and ordinary. But on a voyage, among fifty wimmin, one'll be rated A.B., with a first-class certificate, and the rest ordinary. There was some regeler clippers aft, aboard the 'Southern Cross,' and the one rated first-class was a daisy . . . a picter. She



"PICKED UP THE SLEEPING KITTEN."

reminded me of a woman painted on a almanac what was nailed up in the bar-parlour when I was a pe-missis there nigh. She and the doctor together after dinner. black net over her being in No. 1 rig, at a Admiral's ball. white, with red on last of a sunset on of black hair piled with a red flower eyes . . . Well, wimmin—white, yel- and half-and-half—like that La Countess—she'd fifteen furrin deck chair. They under her long lashes doc., as they stood looking at the moon-



"THE COUNTESS."

of the 'Boy in Blue,' ticeler friend of the twenty years ago. used to walk the deck She'd have a bit of head and shoulders, like a or-ficier's lady She was beautiful her cheeks, like the the sea. She'd a lot a-top of her head, stuck in it, and her I've seen a lot of low, brown, black, but I never seed eyes Rafaila Santa Maria names writ on her kinder smouldered as she looked at the by the starn rail light on the wake.

"He didn't sail right in for her, for, being wishful to get a A.B.'s rating as a doc., having done his duty, he'd read books. Of

course he was perlitte to the passengers, but he was a straight chap, right off drink and cards. Being the only man what didn't loaf around with that Countess, likewise the best looking one aboard, I reckon it roughed her. Anyways, she heaves to and signals him. You knows how they does it, sir and Mr. George, and the doc. left off reading books.

"One first watch, all the stars was out up aloft, and a chap on the fo'c'stle head sings that rotten song about a woman of the name of Nancy Lee, what was a sailor man's missis, what gives me a hump, and aft I goes for to look at the patent log. There being no one on deck, and



"HER EYES KINDER SMOULDERED."

him furrard carrying on howling, I gets to windward of the deck-house. As I casts my eye aloft, thinking of that blooming sailer's star, my old missus a-drinking of my hard-earned Sarvice pension ashore, I hears a sigh from the starn rail, and then the doc. says : ' Perhaps my audicity surprises you, Countess Rafaila del Oreto, for I'm both poor and untitled, but love laughs at rank and pesos, as it do at bolts and bars likewise. ' "

Pausing, he removed the cigar from his mouth, and drew the back of his hand across his lips. Then, in a hoarse falsetto, he recited the following love speech : " ' The Signor . . . Esmond ' forgets I've English relations and heady-cation. The true English gentleman needs no title to nob-ility, and there's one to whom, did he ask me, I would myself betroth. ' Her very words, sir and Mr. George, only it ain't quite how she said 'em, and she looked hard at him too, for he cried out, startled like, ' Rafaila, my darling, can it be true ! ' "

" ' My love for you, oh dearest one, says she, ' is as vast as this sea, and 'll last as long as them stars what's blinking aloft. And I don't care a cuss for pesos or swells, for I love you. ' That ain't quite what she said, but it's the sense of her remarks, and Lord lumme, sir and Mr. George, he lays alongside and hugs her as I've hugged many a nursemaid on Southsea Common as a young chap ashore.

" It wasn't regeler to listen to 'em talking so pretty, so furrard I goes as smart as possible. And when the watch was piped below I gives a steward a golden quid for a bottle ot brandy, which I splits for me and Sam to drink the health of the English gentlemen afloat and ashore, in the Queen's Sarvice and out, for the sea and the earth don't contain their equals.

" There was a regeler stir aft when the news came out. A steward told me her brother turned nasty, but he being only a Argentine nigger, she soon put him down. And old Peter, the skipper, went fair off his head, and wanted to marry 'em right



"HE HUGS HER!"

away on his quarter-deck. And every single man and widower sat in their chairs and swore for a solid day, for this Countess was a bonanza, having sheep and cattle, men servants and wimmin servants, like one of them old chaps what parsons reads of in the Bible.

"When we sights the town of Santos it was fair bust up with fever, and all along the Brazils yellow flags was flying in every port. So we dumps freight into lighters and lands passengers at God-forsaken quarantines. Then we got it. One night a 'decker' went down all of a heap, and for a moment every man furrard felt his liver turn white. The skipper swore solid for five minutes when I reported, and said, 'Find the doctor; if he is courting a queen he must do his duty, poor devil.'

"Aft I goes to the old spot, and there he sat keeping company with the young woman. A fine pair they was too. Bringing my feet down heavy, like a 'jolly' doing night duty on the lower deck, I advances and comes to attention. 'Hullo! Carling,' says he, 'do you want me?'

"A "decker" sick furrard, sir,' says I, saluting.

"What a nuisance,' says he, getting up and shoving out his arm for her to catch hold on. 'May I escort you to the saloon.'

"Stay,' says she, jumping up all of a tremble, 'what is the matter, man?'

"Only a deck passenger a bit off, miss.'

"It is a lie you tell me,' says she, turning on me like one of them big cat leopardes of the West Coast. 'It's a fever.'

"I've been in the Queen's Navy, miss,' says I, being roughed, 'and I don't tell lies. It is the fever.'

"And I was sorry, for down she goes on the seat as white as death, and the doc., poor chap, says, as he turns to her. 'Oh! Carling, you fool, you fool.'

"As I waits furrard in the gangway, I see her hanging on to him by his neck, and he talking serious like. All of a sudden, up she jumps and faces him, with eyes like one of them leopardes, and says loudly, 'I know you to be brave, therefore risk not your life and my happiness. Tell the big man you cannot accompany him.'

"Dearest, you forget, my duty as an officer is'

"It is you who forget your vows, my promised husband. Seat yourself by my side, dear one, one favour only have I asked, and it is refused me. . . . Signor, I command you to stay.'

"Darling,' says he, trying to get hold of her, 'do not tempt me. My duty as an officer, as an Englishman'

" 'Thèn, Englishman,' says she, nasty like, being cool all of a sudden, 'choose now between me and your duty, for I share my love with nothing.'

" 'Rafaila, Rafaila, are you mad?' he cries, staggering back against the rail. 'My God, what a temptation, but you play with me, sweet one. Speak, don't torture. . . .'

"She pulls off a ring, and, holding it towards him, says, 'Choose.'

"Then straightening himself up, like a true Englishman, he says, 'I must do my duty.'

"Her hand shakes a bit as she holds out the ring, and he seizes it, and tries to kiss it. But she pulls it away, and says angrily, 'This is now insolence, sir.'

"Along he comes, with his hands in his pockets and his head on his chest, looking regeler broke up. And as I turns to follow him I see the young woman standing right aft, with her hair all tumbled down, sticking her arms out furrard, like I see 'em

do in theatres. It give me quite a turn, so I didn't tell the doctor for fear it 'ud turn him up.

"The poor swab was rolling about under the lee of the fore hatch, groaning and turning hisself inside out, without a chum standing by him. The doc. soon quieted him down, and I carried him under the fo'c'stle head, fixed up a canvas bulkhead, and left the poor devil with a quart of doctor's stuff and a nigger to pour it into him.



" 'This is a bad job,' says the doc. to me. 'That creole is as good as dead. Come into the dispensaree and have a drink. Then we'll mix the tunny water.'

" 'Aye, aye! sir,' says I.

"He give me a cigar and a drop of brandy and has one hisself, and we sits down. Wishful to cheer him up and make him see the evils of marrying, even if it is countesses with sheeps and cattles, I tells him about me and my old woman. For I'm agen marriage on principle. He didn't kinder catch on, but he laughed

termendus. And just as he was laughing along comes the young woman very quiet and looks in at the door. There she sees him, sitting there with a smoke and a drink, quite jolly like and laughing, and, thinks I, 'Ah! now it's all right, she'll just sail in and hug him.' But, Lord lumme, sir and Mr. George, when she sees her man sitting there happy and comfortable, she staggers back, claps her hands on her breast, and goes off just as they do in theatres.

Wimmin is curious, furrin ones specially so. I didn't tell the doc., for I reckon it was euchre, and might turn him up.

"A fine time we had burying that creole. Old Peter came off the bridge, stiff and starchy in his full dress, with the book of Bible regelashuns in his hand. We quartermasters stood by with the body, sewn up, on a grating. When he'd got half-way through the reading, a big wave broke clean over and swept the entire company aft. Lord lumme! you'd a-laughed. The skipper, half the crew, thirty dirty niggers and the body, all rolling in a heap. Up jumps old Peter, and heaving the regelashuns away, yells, 'Damn all the nonsense! heave the body overboard.'

"HEAVE THE BODY OVERBOARD!"

"Two days after, that ship was a little hell, sir and Mr. George. Dead and dying on deck and below, everyone drunk with tunny water, which is rum, quinine and water mixed in a bucket, everyone afear'd of his shipmate. The skipper on the bridge nigh dead, as the ship rushed full speed for cooler latitudes. And morning, noon and night, the doc. and me walks round among 'em, he pouring medicine down their throats, and me picking out the stiff 'uns and heaving 'em overboard. Poor chaps! I'd say, 'Good luck to you, chummy,' and there was a splash. And every evening she'd come to the end of the promenading deck and look down on us without a word. And the doc. 'ud take of his cap, and she'd just toss her head and walk away. Poor chap, he'd groan, and then cheer up again.

"Old Peter fell down on the bridge, and died within a hour. The first or-ficier had to be carried on deck. Two engineers died, some steward chaps, some passengers aft, and among 'em the young woman's brother. And the doc. and me went about among 'em morning, noon and night. I drank tunny water 'til I could hardly see, and lost my head and liver, and didn't care a cuss who went overboard. And the doc. he got whiter and thinner, but he always cheered up, poor chap.

"'Big man,' says he, smiling, when I turned him out one morning, 'I'm a bit queer; you must carry me to-day.'

"And all day long I carried him in my arms, and very light he was, poor gentleman, but he smiled away quite jolly like. That evening I put him in his cot. There was no fever about him, but I was anxious. All night I sat in the gang-way and heard him tossing about and talking to the young woman in his sleep. At four bells I woke up and went into his state room. I touched him on the shoulder, but he never jumped up with a smile and a kind word as ordinary. Something got hold of my heart, as I turned him on his back. He was dead.

"Snivelling like a girl—and I ain't ashamed of it—I reported to the fourth or-ficier. 'Poor devil,'



"HE WAS DEAD."

says he, 'poor devil. Report to Mr. Andrews; the funeral had better take place at once.'

"But Mr. Andrews had died in the night, so furrard I goes and says, 'Chummies all, the doc. is dead—God help us, and I'll

sew him up in a Jack, if I do a month in quod for stealing one.'

"I took the best Jack I could find—it oughter been a white ensign, sir and Mr. George. I took a nigger and a bottle of brandy aft for to sew him up. But I wouldn't let no nigger touch him, so I punched that darned grinning nigger behind the ear to make him blub, and when the job was done I left him there dead drunk.

"All the crew turned out in their best and fell in behind the bo'sun, for not a or-ficier could turn out. Me and Sam stood by the grating, and the deckers stood around, blubbing with funk. Off comes every cap, and the fourth or-ficier stops the ship. We hadn't got no book of Bible regelashuns, so old Pipes

comes to attention, coughs and says, hoarse like, 'God-a-mighty, up aloft there . . . mates, I ain't no good on this ere job . . . for he was a jolly good fellow . . . and a real English gentleman . . . So 'elp me God.'

"There was a splash as over he went, wrapped in the red, white



"OVER HE WENT!"

and blue, and as the engines went on, and they put the ship on her course, the light seemed to go out of the sea and the sky.

"And strike me flat aback furrard!" he cried, with sudden excitement, "when I went below to the doc.'s state room, there was that darned nigger all inked and dead. And when I looks back upon them times I reckon it'll take more than a few buckets of water down my back to finish me off."

"And the lady, skipper, the lady?"

"Well, Mr. George, I reckon hard work and that young woman's nastiness killed him, poor chap. She comes furrard that night as ordinary. I was having my pipe, and hear her gasp. 'Big man,' says she, 'tell me, where is he?'

"'A thousand fathom deep, miss,' says I, vicious like, 'sewed up in a Jack, having done his duty like an Englishman.' And down she goes, all of a heap, and I never seed her agen, er wanted to."



People I Have Never Met.

By SCOTT RANKIN.

DR. A. CONAN DOYLE.



"Du Luht, with the swift, silent tread of some wild creature, his keen, dark eyes shooting little glances to right and left, observing everything."—THE REFUGEES.

A Worldly Young Woman.

By E. K. S.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MISS DE VINE.

A WORLDLY young woman! Without doubt that is what I am, worldly in every thought and feeling, calculating chances, and labouring to secure my share of pomps and vanities ever since I wore my hair down my back and my petticoats to my knees.



When I first came out I devoted all my energies to the pursuit of eligibles. Nevertheless, for five years, my virtues remained unrewarded, and I began to feel anxious.

"THERE WERE TWO APPLICATIONS."

Of course, I had an occasional flirtation (I think young Dawson, in the Foreign Office, made the nearest approach to anything definite), and there were two applications from a country curate and a penniless sub, which were quite unsuitable.

I am not beautiful, certainly, nor have I "that indefinable charm" with which a novelist so often endows a plain heroine, and as my sixth Ascot drew near, I began, as I say, to feel decidedly anxious.

It was just about then that Papa got so poorly, and had to rest a great deal, and *Truth* said most disagreeable things about him. Sir Angus Blake ordered him into the country as soon as the hot weather began, and he said he should give up work altogether and leave town. He didn't do it, but the thought of it made me nearly frantic.

There were great discussions as to where we should go for the summer. Henry wrote proposing some place on the river, which, out of "pure cussedness," I strongly opposed. Mamma wanted some place very far from town, and Papa said there was really no hurry, we were not starting yet.

And then I met Sir Melton Oaks.



"I SAW HELEN WYNYAR BEARING DOWN ON ME."

It was at a party at the Wynyars, a dull entertainment. A bumptious young barrister would bore me about Arthur Roberts and the Gaiety, and when I snubbed him he reverted to the Coster songs by way of variety.

I saw Helen Wynyar bearing down on me with a lanky, fair-haired young man in tow, and I hurriedly asked my companion who he was.

"Don't you know him, Miss Musgrave?" he said. "That is Sir Melton Oaks, owns that big place on the river, near Cookgrave, don'tcher know."

The next moment Helen introduced him; it was his mission,

it appeared, to take me in to supper, and I was nothing loth. I don't know what it was about him that lifted me out of my usual self; while he talked to me everything seemed different; I should have thought I had fallen in love, only I knew I was not constituted for that little weakness.

All that night, even in my dreams, I seemed to hear his voice giving novelty to the old topics, and to feel his solemn hazel eyes upon me as if he could read my innermost thoughts.

So much has happened since that I cannot honestly say how far I was justified by his behaviour at our first meeting in giving him so large a place in my thoughts; from an intimate knowledge of my own character I am inclined to infer that I was not justified at all, but I certainly did think of him continually. It took me a couple of days to get my ideas into shape, and then, as the first step, I tackled Mamma.

"Henry seems to be working very hard," I observed—she was reading one of his letters for the fifth time, and I felt my remark would give satisfaction.

"Dear boy, I hope he won't overdo it, he must take a *good* rest in the vac," she replied, innocently falling into my trap.

"Where was it he said he would like to go when we leave town?" I continued, with a rather successful air of extreme languor.

"Did he say?" she asked, eagerly. "Oh, Betty, I wish you could remember; Papa seems to have no choice, and we must decide soon."

I knitted my brows.

"He did name some place," I said, thoughtfully, "if only I could think of it," and I meditated deeply.

"Was it some boating place?" Mamma suggested. "He seems interested about rowing, and it's so good for him."

"That's it!" I exclaimed. "How stupid of me! It was Cookgrave; he said the woods would be so jolly for the children."

"Dear Henry," murmured Mamma; "it is really wonderful how thoughtful he is!"

It was all an invention of mine, of course; Henry had never mentioned any particular place.

Within the fortnight we had taken a house at Cookgrave for six months; Mamma was pleased, and greatly commended my consideration for Henry. It suited Papa as well as anything else, and Henry and the children were delighted. I felt that my family had every reason to be grateful to me!

Do other people lie as easily and as often as I do, I wonder? It is obviously not a point on which one can compare notes, but I should very much like to know.

Doreen Brent always believed me so implicitly that she must be truthful herself, but she is rather exceptional. She was once my dearest friend, but lately she has been immensely admired; and I prefer plain people as constant associates.

How bored I was that first week at Cookgrave! The season was still in full swing, and I saw Sir Melton's name in the lists of fashionable assemblies, though I had heard he did not care about society.



"A TEA PICNIC UP THE RIVER."

And then I met him.

Of course, I was immensely surprised, though the *Morning Post* of the previous day had duly chronicled the arrival of Sir Melton and his sister, Lady Gatwick, at Oakfell Hall.

I took the children for a tea picnic up the river (I remember their astonishment when I suggested it; that kind of thing was not much in my line), and we drew in the boat under Oakfell Woods, and lay there nearly two hours. I heard Donald tell Rosa afterwards that it was the stupidest picnic he'd ever had.

And just as we were going away, and I was scolding Daisy for putting her boots on my clean white dress, a skiff shot out from the landing-stage a little behind me and came down stream.

He was going to pass us without taking any notice, but I made a rapid shove with the boathook, and somehow Daisy's hat shot off into the water just by him.

He fished it out, of course (what else could he do, poor man ?) and paddled up with it, blushing violently. I thanked him, and scolded Daisy all in one breath, and then raised my eyes in the utmost confusion, and—recognised him !

I should like to have blushed if Nature had not denied me that gift, but I managed as much surprise and considerably more pleasure than he—good simple-minded fellow—attained to.

He had to stay beside us a little, and we talked.

I congratulated him on escaping so much of the season.

"One never has time to do anything that seems worth doing," I remarked, plaintively, "and all that rushing about gets very wearisome, don't you think ?"

"I loathe it," he responded, heartily.

"I love the country so," I said ; "some people told me Cookgrave was dull, but I find it delightful."

I was sorry I had brought Rosa, she really ought to have more tact than to open her mouth in that astounded way when I say anything.

"My sister will find you a kindred spirit," said Sir Melton ; "are you too wedded to solitude to care to see her ?"

"Mamma will be delighted, I'm sure ; we have taken Cookgrave Rise," I rejoined, trying not to be too delighted myself.

And then he lifted his cap, and, with a few strong strokes, was out of sight.

I let Rosa and Donald row me home, and lay in the stern, absorbed in delicious dreams.

I did not imagine he would fall in love with me ; after five years' experience I knew better than that ; but I did think that if I managed well, and he remained at Oakfell all the summer, he would drift into my carefully-organised trap.

The next day Lady Gatwick called, and thenceforth fortune favoured me. I gave great encouragement to a budding friendship between Rosa and Daisy and Lady Gatwick's children, and quite puzzled my unsuspecting family by my readiness to escort them to and from Oakfell. To this day, I believe Lady Gatwick causes considerable astonishment among my acquaintance by describing me as—"a model elder sister."

I used to meet him nearly every day. Once he organised a picnic for the children by the river, and, after tea, he asked me

to let him paddle me about in his boat while they washed up. We lay in midstream, scarcely speaking, but watching the eddies of the water, and I felt that he was drifting—drifting—drifting, and I was absolutely happy.

There was not much to think of at Cookgrave, and I let that one topic absorb me. When we played hide and seek at Oakfell I chose the room that should be my boudoir; I thought of the announcement in the *Morning Post*, the congratulations, the presents, the trousseau; I pictured him waiting for me at the altar rails when the great day came.

By day and by night this one infatuation overpowered me. Was it love? Well, yes. Love for the old house and fine park, the



"WE LAY IN MIDSTREAM."

title, the family portraits, and £20,000 a year—all these things had engaged my affections; and, as for the man himself—he was admirably suited to them, and would have been no incumbrance; he was not quite like other men that one meets about the world.

But a deliberate schemer cannot be expected to know much about love, can she?

And then—in the midst of my peaceful, orderly arrangements—a thunderbolt fell. It took the form of a letter from Mrs. Brent asking Mamma to take in Doreen while she paid visits in Scotland. And Mamma—who never has any consideration for me—wrote by return to say she would be delighted.

Lady Gatwick gave a picnic up the river the day after Doreen arrived; there was a considerable house-party, and they had a steam-launch—Doreen was shy and stayed with me all day, and Sir Melton also scarcely left me; I remember thinking her rather in the way.

For the next three weeks Sir Melton was always at Cookgrave Rise, and as Doreen and I were, of course, a good deal together, she saw him very often. At the end of that time Lady Gatwick got up a little informal dance at Oakfell, and then my eyes were opened.

Once, and once only, did he dance with me, but whenever I raised my eyes I saw him dancing with Doreen; whenever from force of habit I guided an eligible partner to a very secluded nook, he and Doreen were always there before us.

It was a very fine summer night, and when we got home I put out my light and sat by my open window a long time, and then, suddenly, my feelings became too much for me, and I threw myself down by the window-seat and cried.

I was miserably disappointed. As I knelt there I began to realise the futility of my efforts, and the horrible fact that Sir Melton had never really given me the slightest foundation for my hopes.

And then, to think that Doreen should have him! Doreen—whom I had always tried to despise as countrified and inexperienced; that all the triumphs I had planned for myself should be for her, that Sir Melton—proof against scores of attacks—should brighten at her approach, should have a smile for her which I had never yet beheld. It was very ridiculous of me, but I sobbed as if my heart would break.

“Betty, Betty, what is the matter?”

It was Doreen, tall and graceful, in her white dressing-gown, with a wonderfully happy light in those great blue eyes of hers.

“Betty, are you very tired? May I stay a minute? I have something that I want very much to tell you.”

Of course I knew what was coming, and I felt I could not bear it. I want to tell the truth, not to excuse myself; there was really no excuse, but I was half-mad with disappointment, and it was a sudden impulse.

I had cried so long that it was easy to cry a little longer and ignore what she said. Doreen was always so sympathetic.

She sat down beside me, and begged me to tell her what was the matter, and, when she had pressed me sufficiently, I did.

I told it well, interspersed with appropriate sobs; I told her—with much self-accusation—how I had managed our coming to Cookgrave that I might see him again, how often we had been together, and how deeply I had learnt to love him; there was a candour about my confession which I felt to be most engaging; “and now,” I concluded, with an energetic sob (I felt it was the last which would be forthcoming), “I feel as if I must die of the shame of it!”

“Oh, no, dear,” said Doreen, gently, “there is not really any shame in loving a good man.”

“You don’t know,” I cried. “Oh, Doreen, I have let him kiss me!”



“MAY I STAY A MINUTE?”

Doreen flushed hotly, and then, as the colour faded away, her face seemed to change, and grow suddenly old and worn.

She sprang to her feet, nearly upsetting me, and, walking rapidly to the further window, stood, looking out.

I watched Doreen, her slight figure clearly outlined against the summer sky. I saw her hands clenching convulsively, and her shoulders quiver with her long-drawn, panting breath. I knew what exaggerated ideas she had, that nothing less than the best would satisfy her, and I had not miscalculated.

"I did not think he was that kind of man," she said at last; "oh, I wish I had known, I wish I had known!" She was speaking more to herself than to me, and there was something in her voice that made my heart fail me; I very nearly caught her hand and told her the truth, but she walked wearily past me, and went out of the room, and I did not speak.

He came the next day, but she was waiting for him, and stopped him half-way up the drive; I watched them from my window. They were not together more than two minutes, and then he suddenly turned on his heel and went away, and Doreen came into the house. I heard her shut her bedroom door and lock it, but she came down to lunch, and went on the river afterwards. Doreen is wonderfully "game."



'TURNED ON HIS
HEEL.'

She left us the following day, and I was not sorry; it was not very easy to talk to her, and I hate to be made uncomfortable.

We returned to town in November, and it was in January that Jack proposed. His father made a fortune in something, pickles, I think, or blacking, and he is in the Guards.

We were married before Lent—I don't believe in procrastination.

People told me Jack was a fool, and I am learning to agree with them.

After four months he still has the utmost faith in me; poor old Jack—sometimes I wish it might last!

Doreen would not be my bridesmaid, and I did not see her till June, when she came to stay with an aunt in town.

I never saw anyone so changed; she said it was the heat, but that did not seem likely.

I am not sensitive, I don't think I have any conscience, yet her face haunted me. I was having a very lively time, my misguided husband seemed to think nothing too good for me, but still I could not forget it.

I have done several queer things before now, but what I did then was the queerest. I did it as soon as it struck me, for I knew if I hesitated even my heart might fail me.

Sir Melton's rooms are near Grosvenor Square, and I went about eleven. I would not give my name, but simply followed the man upstairs and into his sitting-room. He shook hands quite cordially, but he certainly looked surprised.

I plunged into the subject at once.

"Sir Melton," I said, "this is not a morning call. I have something important to tell you, and I must ask you not to interrupt."

I sat down, with my back to the light, and told him with very little preamble—well, what I had come there to tell him.

It only took two minutes by the clock. I expressed myself with my usual clearness, but it appeared an age, and when I had finished my heart seemed to stop. I have often seen men look angry, but Sir Melton looked fierce.

I would rather he had struck me than glared like that, but his face was rather fascinating even then; ah, happy Doreen!

"Mrs. Darrell," he said, "will you be so good as to write a contradiction of your former statement, here, and at once, that I may take it to Miss Brent?"

He placed a chair at his writing-table, and I wrote—

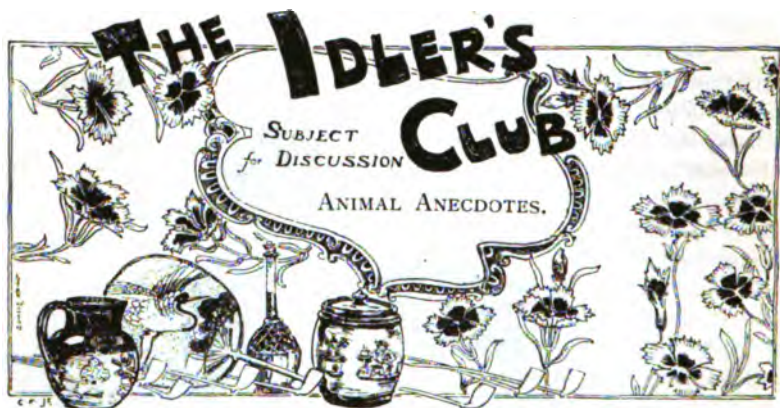
DEAR DOREEN,—What I told you at Cookgrave about Sir Melton was a lie. I wished to prevent your engagement.—Yours, BETTY DARRELL. I handed it to him to read, and he folded it and put it in his pocket. "Good-bye, Sir Melton," I said, and, without thinking, held out my hand. But he merely bowed, and employed his in opening the door for me.

The engagement was announced that week, and the other day I saw them in the Row. They were riding very close together, and seemed very happy, but when I met them, they looked the other way.

I suppose, when one comes to think of it, that was only to be expected!



"I WROTE."



BY G. R. SIMS, G. B. BURGIN, A. S. BOYD, JOHN GULICH,
 DAYNTON BOYLE, JUSTIN AMOS, AND LOUIS TRACY.

Whenever I am in company, and the conversation
 G. R. Sims leads drifts in the direction of animals, I always feel that
 off. the presence of a commissioner for taking affidavits,
 not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of
 good faith, would supply a long felt want. The first time that
 I ever attended church, and listened to a sermon in a spirit of
 scientific enquiry, was immediately after I had heard the vicar
 of my parish tell a story about his dog. Up to that moment I
 accepted all he told me as gospel. After that moment—but
 hear the story, and judge for yourselves.

* * * *

“I have a dog,” said the vicar, “and he has con-
 The vicar's story. vinced me that animals have the reasoning faculty.
 In my house the supper is always cold on Sunday
 evening, and we take it early, immediately after our return from

church. Everything is put on the table before we start from home, in order that the servants may attend the evening service. Last Sunday there was no one left at home but my dog. There was a cold pigeon pie on the supper table, out of which one piece had been cut. When we sat down to supper that evening the first thing I took out of that pigeon pie was a sponge. My dog had got on the table, pulled out the pigeon, found that the gap would betray him, had gone into the hall, bitten off the sponge, hanging by a string to the slate kept for callers, jumped on the table with it, and rammed it into the pigeon pie with his nose." I never listened to our vicar's sermons again without there coming to my mind that much-quoted line of the late lamented Laureate :—

"There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds."

Honest doubt is the prevailing sentiment with regard to animal stories.

* * * *

But since those early days of doubt I have had wonderful animals of my own, and now I am quite sure that the vicar's story was a true one. I have a cat who ought to be handed down to posterity with the cat of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, the poetess, who, when his mistress lay ill and could eat nothing, watched her rejecting delicacy after delicacy, and then went downstairs into the kitchen, caught a nice fat mouse, and brought it up and laid it on the invalid's bed, thinking that might, perhaps, tempt back her lost appetite. My cat, one day that I lay ill in my bedroom with influenza, noticed that the sun was in my eyes, and distressed me. I was afraid to get out of bed and ring the bell because I had just got into a nice perspiration, and the doctor had ordered me to be careful—not on any account to get a chill. My housekeeper had fancied that I had fallen asleep, and had left me. My cat sat and looked at me, and saw my discomfort. Presently an idea occurred to him. He gave a little sympathetic purr, and then jumped off the foot of the bed, leaped up on to the dressing-table, took the cord of the blind between his front paws,

and deliberately pulled it down for me. I love my cat very much; but ever since that day I have been rather afraid of him; I wonder what a cat of that intelligence must think in his heart of what he hears me say, and what he sees me do. Whenever I feel inclined to break out into one of my fits of nervous irritability, and I see Master Tom with his green eyes fixed upon me, I say to myself "Not before the cat." The refining influence of that cat upon my home and habits has been distinct and appreciable.

* * * *

Another dog
story.

My dogs, thanks to a big popular movement with which they were identified, have been paragraphed pretty freely over the English-speaking world. Pickle and Spider, two black-and-tans (mother and daughter), were struck many years ago (alas, they lie together in my garden now, under one headstone) by the account of the brave rescue of a retriever from a burning house by fireman Craggs, of Rochdale, and they at once appealed to the dogs of Great Britain for a national testimonial to the benefactor of their species. They raised a large amount of money, and the dogs of some very celebrated men contributed handsomely. It is a long time since my old dogs, the faithful loving companions of all the brightest and happiest years of my life, took their last walk in the Park; but as I write their gentle eyes look down upon me from the canvas, and bring back to me many an instance of their human intelligence, and more than human sympathy. It was Spider who thought over a highly original method of getting her mother's afternoon bone, and carried it out with immense success. If there was one thing that Pickle could not endure it was a cat in her back garden, and so one day Spider, who was much quicker with her bone than her parent, hit upon the idea of pretending there was a cat in the garden. She gave a furious bark, and dashed towards the garden. Off flew her mother, too. Then Spider stopped short, let her mother pass her, ran back, and seized the still meaty bone. I have seen the younger dog spoof the old one in this way dozens of times, and it was a long time before the old dog tumbled to the dodge. When she did she went off after the imaginary cat, in case there

might be one there, but she picked her bone up in her mouth and carried it with her.

* * * *

Horses know a great deal, but for downright artfulness there is nothing to equal a pony. I have And about a pony who goes where he likes, does as he likes, pony. and reduces everybody round him to a state of absolute submission to his will. In any stable where he may find himself he is absolute master, and in certain hotel stables at Richmond, Barnet, Stanmore, Uxbridge, and Harrow, he is known as "The Terror." He has his own particular fancy in the way of stalls, and if he finds his favourite one occupied, he will, directly he is left, slip his head-collar and turn the intruder deliberately out. He has a strong objection to waiting in the street. If I stop at a house or a shop more than two minutes he will rear right up on his hind legs, and walk about in that position with the trap behind him, to the terror of the groom and the astonishment of the spectators. On several occasions when he has done this I have seen him from a window, and have turned out and started for home. Now he does it systematically, and I know that if I keep him waiting too long there is a circus performance going on outside which would be an exceedingly attractive item in one of Lord George Sanger's processions. His father won the Grand National, and his father's name was "Disturbance." He is constantly imitating his father. I have other anecdotes of animals by me, but in the absence of that Commissioner I hesitate to tell them.

* * * *

The only horse I ever owned was a pony, a milk-white steed of some ten hands, who came into mine in exchange for a series of involuntary loans. Burgin gets an Arab steed. "I'll not insult you by paying back the money," my friend said; "but I'll give you Tom Thumb as a present, and we'll consider it square." It was either Tom Thumb or nothing, so I chose Tom Thumb. My Chief was quartered out at the fortifications round Constantinople, and it had been hinted to

my friend (he was a magnificently handsome fellow, six feet two in height, and had been in the Guards) that he did not look dignified enough to impress the Oriental mind when mounted on Tom Thumb. The other staff officers didn't like it. They said that it cast discredit on them when a comrade turned out mounted on a white rat, and his toes almost touching the ground. The scandal grew when my friend (he was an impatient man always) carried Tom Thumb across a stream one day. It was reversing the natural order of things; and so the Chief, who had witnessed this circus feat, decided that Tom Thumb was more adapted to my size than anyone else's.

* * * *

Some months later I was going to live in Constantinople and didn't want a horse, so decided to sell Tom Thumb, who had proved himself a gem in miniature. "Effendi, I will take him to the horse-bazaar, and return laden with liras," said my faithful man, Halil, through the medium of our rascally dragoman. I agreed, and the next morning went down to the courtyard to say farewell to my Arab steed, half-resolved to fling intending purchasers back their gold, after the manner of the time-honoured recitation. Tom Thumb was dancing frantically about at the end of a halter, as if feeling his corn, and saluted me with a kick (he was very quick with what I once heard a missionary's wife call his "hind heels"), which just missed my ear. Closer inspection proved that there was a reason for "this antic disposition," and that his eyes were starting out of his head. "What's the matter with him?" I asked. "Is he going crazy?" "Crazy, Effendi! No, that's his great soul. We put some salt—much salt—in the water-bucket just to make him lively. See, Effendi, he jumps like a gazelle." The poor brute was half mad with thirst. After I had given him some water without any salt in it, he accepted my apology, and we lovingly parted. The next day I was strolling down the Grand Rue de Pera, and met the Chief's valet, one Joseph, a Greek. "I hear you want to sell your pony, Effendi?" he said. "Yes." "Well, I have a little daughter of twelve who would be very good to it. As

you are fond of the pony, sell it to me cheaply, and I will take care of it." After some haggling, and in consideration of the moral atmosphere by which the pony was to be surrounded, I parted with him for eight liras, cash down. The next day in came my servant Halil, with the dragoman, and pleaded for bakshish because he had sold the pony so well. "What?" I asked. "Yes, Effendi," said the simple-minded Halil, "I took my lord's pony to the Bazaar, and sold him for fourteen liras. As I was coming back I met Joseph, who told me you had sent him for the money, and I gave it to him." The Greek, with the financial genius of his nation, had made the most of the opportunity, and pocketed six liras. A few days later I met Tom Thumb carrying a man of about fourteen stone in the same airy way with which he used to dispose of my hundred pounds' weight. I bowed shamefacedly, but he cut me dead.

* * * *

The animal in question belongs to a gilded youth who has more money than he knows what to do. He knows a dog with, and consequently spends it somewhat boyishly. His retriever enjoys a scent bath every morning, and is very particular as to where he dines. He is now growing fat and lazy, and, although fond of sneaking out for a morning stroll in Hyde Park, objects to walking home again. His plan is to watch for a hansom, if going in his direction at a walk, and slip into it. When any attempt is made to dislodge him, he simply displays two rows of magnificent teeth, and wrinkles his upper lip in a curiously suggestive smile. Most of the park-keepers know him, and give the cabmen his address. Cabmen in the vicinity of the Park keep a look-out for him, and leave their doors invitingly open. When the dog reaches home, he remains in the cab until the valet comes out to pay the fare. Then he descends in a leisurely manner and eats his lunch with appetite. This dog is alleged to be first cousin to another dog, which on one occasion was not fed at his usual luncheon hour. Presently the animal got up, walked slowly into the garden, and solemnly returned, holding a forget-me-not in his

A. S. Boyd and
Tomuel.

Tomuel Hook was a cat of ours, and regarding him I would like to make one or two plain statements that are not without their lesson to the young and heedless. He was born of poor but respectable parents in the Fifeshire village where he first came into our possession, and was christened by our three-year-old. While yet of tender age he was taken to live in a flat in the city. Like other youth from the country he was eager to investigate the ways of town life, and early in his urban career he went astray. Some message-boys, who had been apprised of the fact, searched him out and brought him home, earning a reward of sixpence. The tail of Tomuel was evidence that he had found his way to the premises of a worker in stucco, and he waited quietly with us till the plaster had worn off his fur. Then he went a-missing again. The message-boys re-discovered him, their reward being twopence. A penny was afterwards disbursed for a future recovery of the lost one, and a halfpenny orange on another occasion. After that when Tomuel took his walks abroad he found his way home himself.

* * * *

The disinfecting
of Tomuel.

When our youngster took measles Tomuel insisted on being as much as possible with the invalid, and the doctor said he was a splendid medium for the spread of infection. When the measles had gone, the sanitary people came to make things sweet, and they set a-going some powerful sulphurous fumes in the sick-room, shut the door, and told us not to open it for eight hours. It was no doubt a laudable desire to be disinfected that prompted Tomuel to remain in that room as long as he could; but before the end of the first half-hour his yells were appalling, and when the door was opened a few inches it was a sorry animal that staggered forth, sneezing, coughing, spluttering, bristling in every hair, and thinking it was time to die. Tomuel was tearful and reflective for some days after this, and was never known to brag of the episode.

We were scarcely surprised one Sunday morning early when we discovered that the occupants of the flat under ours had gone out of town from Saturday to Monday, leaving their rooms untenanted, save for Tomuel. Our neighbours did not approve of us or of Tomuel, and how he gained admission to their flat we did not find out. He objected in no measured terms to being shut up alone, and we fed the prisoner through the letter-slit with scraps of chicken, words of comfort, and other dainties. He wailed all that Sunday and in the watches of the night, but we were confident that he had a good run round these rooms on the look-out for some mischief to get into, though his pathetic face, when he was restored to us on Monday afternoon, revealed nothing. When summer came round again, Tomuel, in a basket, returned with us for the season to his native village. Here, with the perversity for awkward situations that had always characterised him, he presented himself with kittens—three. Two of them we drowned in a pail and buried in the garden, the third remained to solace and survive his parent. After this we had no confidence in Tomuel, and it was deemed inadvisable to take him and his offspring back to the city. So on a dark autumn night they were conveyed in a sack to the miller's house, where Tomuel had first seen the light, and where there was now an opening for two of the species. We saw him no more, but it was with regret we heard, a short time after his return to the mill, that his inveterate curiosity had led him to partake, merely as an experiment, of a quantity of rat-poison. Thus it was that Tomuel Hook laid him down and died, in the flour (this spelling is correct under the circumstances) of his youth, as we might say, another victim of the widespread craving for new sensations.

* * * *

Another cat I knew belonged to the village grocer, and was sitting one day on the counter. The grocer's cat, when the minister's wife was doing her shopping. He was passing his tongue, repeatedly and with evident relish, over the face of a smoked ham just where a slice would be cut off for the next customer. The minister's wife, horror-struck, called attention to this, but the grocer, an energetic

old lady in spectacles, replied, "Hoot aye, it'll dae'm na hairm. Bauldy maun aye hae a lick o' a'thing that comes in!"

* * * *

Gulich on the horse.

I had never mounted a horse before, and resolved to test my equestrian powers on the very first opportunity that offered. This was soon forthcoming, for my uncle, with whom I was staying and painting my first commission, owned an ideal animal, which was twenty years old, large-jointed, and sad-eyed. He had not worked for many years, except to drag a roller over the cricket-pitch once a week during the summer months. With much trepidation I approached the stable, and led my Rosinante forth into the light of day. No sooner had I thrown the saddle upon his back, and stooped down to fasten the strap which goes underneath, than he raised his left foot and put it down gently on mine. He must have found it soft and comfortable for he kept it there, and no language of mine could persuade him to remove it. I pushed him with all my strength, but he only affectionately returned the pressure. After a dreary length of time he lifted it, more of his own desire than of my efforts, and I once more proceeded with my task, and genuinely succeeded at last. Then the crucial moment arrived, and I clambered upon his back. He turned right round and re-entered his stable. I was scraped off by the top of the doorway! Then I arose from the ground and sadly closed the door. Now there is much speculation among the stablemen as to how he got the saddle on his back, and why he had put it on wrong side foremost.

* * * *

Justin Amos saves
a dog.

The romance of my life nearly centred round a dog. One May day I was fishing above a rustic bridge in a little stream in Devonshire, and a big trout was tantalizingly splashing at the flies on the other side of the river, when I became aware that a maiden of heavenly beauty was watching me from the bridge. The lovely girl was accompanied by a dog of sufficiently mean appearance

to warrant his being a fashionable pet. The big trout rose, my line sang taut, and I had two pounds of fish rushing down stream with a hook bedded in his jaw. The girl watched the sport with dancing eyes, the dog looked critically at the performance. Suddenly the trout sprang high in the air. There was a moment's suspense, but when the rod bent again my goddess gave a start of delight that precipitated the dog into the river. "Oh, save him!" she cried, "he can't swim." I hesitated but one moment, then waded out to the pup, playing the trout as I went. My progress was too slow, and the canine was fast drifting helplessly with the current; so, hoping that the young lady would appreciate the sacrifice, I gave one tug at the line, snapped it, placed my rod on the bank, and went for the dog. I *got* the dog. He clasped me lovingly round the neck with his fore paws, and endeavoured to walk up my face with his remaining feet, but at last I secured him under my arm and started for the shore, informing my heroine that I would bring the brute up to her in one moment. She, however, bashfully replied that the dog would probably find his own way home and disappeared.

* * * *

Her intimation, however, gave me hope. I determined that I would follow the dog and restore it *in propria persona*. The animal displayed considerable doubt as to his way home at first, but at last started off at a brisk pace towards the neighbouring town. At the first public-house we came to the dog shoved open the door in a most intimate manner, and entered the bar. As I reached the door, I met the dog coming out—and coming out in a hurry. A pewter pot was also coming out in a greater hurry even than the dog. It passed over his head, and struck me smartly on the chin. I had no time to retaliate, as my tracker was evidently determined to get home now without undue delay, and I plunged down the street in his wake. He turned the next corner rather suddenly, and when I did likewise he came up to me with a friendly air, carrying a mutton chop in his mouth. Then I disclaimed him, but a local constable came to the aid of the owner of the chop, added a charge of keeping a dangerous dog unmuzzled in the

public street, and, as the Petty Sessions Court was sitting, brought me up for trial right off. My girl was sitting in a little alcove near the Bench, conversing with the Chairman, who appeared to be an intimate relative. She should have recognised me and thanked me, and got the Chairman to bring me home and give me a good time—but she didn't. She let me be fined for having *her* dog unmuzzled. When it was all over it struck me that she never *said* it was her dog. Perhaps it wasn't.

* * * *

The intellectual
mule.

It is popularly supposed that no animal has the same degree of intelligence as the horse. This may be true, but the mule is entitled to credit for the possession of a higher intellectual degree than his relative. Last year a great trotting match at Nashville had to be postponed owing to the favourite having kicked the coloured driver on the head. Now an American trotter is the highest type of horse, but you'd never hear of the meanest mule that ever loitered through this life kicking his coloured groom on the head. He's got more sense. When he kicks he fetches up right on the darkey's shin, and if anyone fails to come up to time after the encounter, that person is not the mule.

* * * *

The horse's pros-
pects.

Still the horse has a great future before him. Already he has made his mark as a social and political agitator. He has obtained Acts of Parliament for his protection. The business of our legislative assembly is annually postponed to do him honour. Bulletins are issued daily as to how he enjoyed his bran mash and his constitutional gallop. At times he bears the ministry and its fortunes, and the imperial measures of a great nation depend on how are his poor feet. If history repeat itself, three hundred years hence, trainers, horses, and jockeys will be sacrosanct in England. A thousand years more and all three will have been humbled to the dust. "Wise as the sacred birds of love," the augurs said; now we say "silly as a goose."

You can't, with any sense of moral justification, call a parrot a bird. It's generally a beast of some sort, which screams like a child and bites like a badger. Some friends of mine have another variety of parrot, a highly moral temperance one, who is celebrated for demanding, in decidedly inebriated tones, "A glash o' wawtah." He adhered to this phrase so pertinaciously, that the Vicar conceived the idea of borrowing him for the bazaar at the annual Sunday School treat. The Vicar thought that the example of so humble a bird in refusing to ask for alcoholic beverages would do much good among his parishioners. In the meantime he suggested that the parrot should be put out in the front garden, in order to convert some reprobate brick-makers who passed the house daily in going and returning from work. The very first day the bird was put out on the lawn, a drunken bricklayer leant up against the railings, and was so overcome by its request, that he conceived it to be his duty to re-educate the feathered temperance apostle, and proceeded to do so every evening with unvarying persistency.

On the day of the bazaar the parrot had a little tent all to himself, with a notice of his temperance qualifications on the outside, and an intimation that twopence a head would be charged for interviewing him and ascertaining his sentiments. "It is rather a startling innovation, Mr. Dean," said the Vicar, as he did the honours to the great gun of the day, "but I anticipate that much good will be done if other birds could be trained in the same way." The Dean was dubious, but expressed a wish to hear the parrot, who immediately began to dance up and down, and shriek out at the top of its voice an altogether unexpected request for "Gin an' wawtah ! gin an' wawtah !" and was speedily sent home in disgrace.

* . * * *

That monstrous pachyderm, the elephant, is a difficult animal to understand. It is no trouble to him to work, yet he prefers to be idle. If he wants to knock a house down, or pull up a tree by the roots, he just does it, but at the same time he objects to being compelled to

labour a moment longer than is necessary. In the timber-yards of Rangoon he is employed in dragging timber out of the Irrawadi river, and piling it in huge heaps for exportation. A bell rings at certain hours for meals, or as a signal to knock off work for the day, and if an elephant has a plank partly out of the water, the moment he hears the bell he just leaves the plank where it is. The best mahout in Asia cannot get him to budge an inch when time is up. Elephants are not fed in India on buns, and biscuits, and cigar ends; they get more solid and wholesome fare. A couple of big chupatties, or unleavened loaves, are doled out to them when on the march with troops, and I can vouch for the following incident having occurred during a big gathering of the clans in the Punjab. Two hundred elephants did the furniture shifting for the artillery and commissariat, and in the evening they were drawn up in two long lines to receive their cakes. It happened that the first pair of loaves were lighter in weight than usual, so after the leading elephant had balanced them in his trunk he passed them on to the next. The process was repeated until the two chupatties had gone the round of the two hundred, and the last of the second row handed, or trunked, them over to No. 1. This latter gentleman weighed them again with the utmost care, and then hit his attendant with them on the head, taking such sure aim that the man was felled to the earth.

* * * *

Elephants are not cheap, and their possession is
About elephants. a sign of dignity in a native. I once knew two small rajahs who had a bad time owing to this fact. They were brothers, and one elephant united their joint wants, until the younger chief married, his brother being already the Hindu equivalent to a Benedict. It is not quite the same thing as we imply by the phrase, but no matter. Of course he bought an elephant of his own, whereupon the Rani of the elder brother thought that, as a mark of superiority, her husband ought to have two elephants. The second Rani was a woman of spirit, so on the next gala day she appeared in a howdah on the third of a small procession of elephants. This game of brag went on until the brothers had nine elephants apiece, with all their

capital gone in mountains of flesh, and their substance disappearing down the throats of eighteen elephants, with their numerous retainers. At last the rajahs smoked a friendly hookah together, sold all the elephants at a big sacrifice, slipped their wives with the heel ends, and everybody was happy again.

* * * *

I often tried to learn the language in which the mahout speaks to an elephant, but failed. The same A flexible tongue. sound seems to make an elephant break up firewood, take a drink, and go on his knees to allow you to get on his back; and a tongue which can convey such different information in precisely similar grunts presented philological niceties which were beyond my limited brain-power. It is necessary to state that each command was accompanied by the digging of an iron spike about two inches into a raw place on the elephant's skull. There may have been a world of meaning in the varying viciousness of the dig, but I could not appreciate the distinction, and only wondered why the elephant did not whip the mahout from between his ears and kneel on him. The mahout would pass into a dark stain on the ground if this had happened, but it never came off in my presence. I once saw the boss elephant of the herd give a skittish young thing twenty strokes with a three-inch chain, and I was profoundly glad that I was not an elephant. Occasionally elephants go on the loose, and run *amok* through the bazaar. It is a fine way to open up new streets, but the natives do not appreciate it, and the authorities fire platoons at the reveller until he ends his frolic. About three years ago some scientists in Calcutta wished to try the effect of an electric shock upon an elephant, and hitched a fairly strong battery on to him. The result was a complete surprise—to the scientists. After moving some miles in various directions, they met to compare notes, but no report was ever issued.

* * * *

I must conclude with a story. Not long ago, her Majesty the Queen received a well-known and ponde- At a levée. rous Anglo-Indian official at a levée in Bucking-

ham Palace. He is a tremendous chap, and among the brilliant company was a native prince who can crack a joke with anybody in fluent Persian. As the gigantic official approached the throne he bowed so deeply that he slipped on the polished floor, fell on his back, knocked the wind out of himself, and could not rise. "Ha, ha," growled the prince, in a deep bass voice; "Hathi-ka mafik!" ("How like an elephant") and all the Anglo-Indians present laughed more loudly than is customary at such royal functions. Even the Queen smiled.





"I THINK YOU'LL DO, YOU KNOW—SOME DAY," SAID MRS. DUNCAN."

A Lesson in the Art.

BY ANTHONY HOPE.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY HAL HURST.

"G H, but you'll have to learn," said Mrs. Maurice Duncan, making room for me beside her; "you couldn't employ your vacation better."

"Will you teach me, Mrs. Duncan?" I asked.

"I believe you are learning," said she, with a glance.

"You said that just in the right way—with the right look too."

"I'm very young," said I, pathetically.

"H'm," observed Mrs. Maurice Duncan.

"But if I watch people who know how to do it——"

"I'm sure you can't mean me?" she said, obviously assuming that I did. "Seriously, you



"MAKING ROOM FOR ME BESIDE HER."

ought to do it very well," and she sighed gently. She was a woman of pleasing appearance.

"Why ought I to do it very well?" I had the curiosity to ask.

"Oh, well, Mr. Vansittart—but you don't want to be flattered, do you?"

"I am flattered."

"Are you? How?"

"By your sitting here with me."

"I don't believe you want any lessons at all," declared Mrs. Duncan.

My eyes encountered Mrs. Duncan's eyes. She nodded and smiled; I am not to this day quite sure that she did not blush. I averted my eyes and glanced across the room.

"Ah!" said I, "if I watch that girl talking to the tall man, I might learn."

Mrs. Duncan looked in the direction indicated. She smiled and shrugged her shoulders.

"I don't think you'll learn much there," she said.

"Oh, I don't know," said I. "Look, she's made room for him beside her."

"Well, I did that."

"So you did. Then it means nothing, of course?"

"Nothing at all, Mr. Vansittart," she smiled.

"And they're talking to one another quite low."

"We're not speaking very loud."

"Well, we won't count that then. Oh, but look! He's buttoning her glove."

"That's nothing. You'd do that for me, wouldn't you?"

"Rather—if the button came undone, you know." Mrs. Duncan smiled again.

"But what's he taken her fan for?" I asked, puzzled. "I don't see much point in that."

"There isn't any; it's stupid," said she, letting her own fan hang loosely in her fingers.

"Is it?" said I; and I tried it.

The man opposite opened and shut the fan; I followed his example. Mrs. Duncan seemed to pay little attention to me; I threw Mrs. Duncan's fan down carelessly.

"Take care; you'll break it," she said, almost sharply.

"Look!" I cried. "He's turned right round, and he's staring at her like anything!" and I gazed across in a most interested manner.

"Well, it's sometimes thought polite to look at people when you talk to them."

"I think that's more than politeness," said I, turning to Mrs. Duncan.

"Do you? Then it's different from your look, isn't it? You're looking away again!"

"Well, I want to see them."

Mrs. Duncan took up her fan and beat it softly against the palm of her hand.

"He's looking this way now," I cried, as the tall man suddenly turned towards us and smiled.

"Please don't mind *them*," said Mrs. Duncan, laying the tips of two fingers on my arm.



I felt pleased. The tall man turned round to the girl again.

To speak it plainly, their heads almost met. Mrs. Duncan leant forward to me.

"Are you very bored, talking to a poor old widow like me?" she said, but in so low a tone that I had to bend my head quite close to hers, to hear.

"I don't call you old," said I, suddenly realising that her complexion was very pretty. "You can't be any older than I am."

"Oh, you're very foolish, Mr. Vansittart," and she laughed softly.

" 'PLEASE DON'T MIND THEM,' SAID MRS. DUNCAN, LAYING THE TIPS OF TWO FINGERS ON MY ARM."

I glanced again across the room ; nothing was to be seen but a black head and a fair one in close proximity. . It was not interesting. I turned again to Mrs. Duncan, who started the least bit in the world.

"How do you manage those little curls on your forehead ?" I asked (I like to understand things).

"Oh, it's quite easy. Do you think they're not real, Mr. Vansittart ?"

"I don't know," said I, prudently.

"They're all my own. What an unbelieving boy you are! How can I satisfy you?"

I looked round the room. Supper was going on, and, save for the preoccupied couple opposite, we were alone.

"One could tell if one pulled one," I observed.

"Oh, could one ?" laughed Mrs. Duncan.

"A hard pull," said I, and I half advanced my hand.

Mrs. Duncan looked round. I didn't—I don't know why not.

"What would any one think if they saw ?" she asked.

"I don't care," said I.

"It's all very well for you ——"

"But there's no one here—except those two—and they're not thinking of *us*," and I smiled most knowingly.

"Aren't they ?" she asked, with a little laugh. "Well, perhaps not, Mr. Vansittart."

"They won't notice," I urged. Somehow, I wanted to do it.

"Well," she said, "we—we'll chance it—but be quick. No, not just now, wait till I say 'Now.'"



"A BLACK HEAD AND A FAIR ONE IN CLOSE PROXIMITY."

I held my hand in readiness. Mrs. Duncan's eyes travelled round the room; they rested, alert, for a moment on the couple opposite; swiftly they were back on mine, and she cried "Now!" I pulled.

"Oh!" said Mrs. Duncan, in a little shriek that was half a laugh.

The curl stood the ordeal. I looked round. Confusion! The tall man was glaring straight at us.

"How beastly unlucky!" I exclaimed to Mrs. Duncan's fan—for her face was entirely hidden.

I got no answer, unless the gentlest mirthful gurgle were to count as one.

"Did it hurt?" I asked.

"Not much," said Mrs. Duncan, displaying one eye round the side of the fan.

Suddenly there was a movement opposite. Our friends rose; the man gave his arm; they walked to the door.

"That's the way to the conservatory," I observed. "I say, he's looking awfully riled. She must have sat on him."

"Do you think so?" asked Mrs. Duncan, looking up at me, and seeming much amused. "Suppose we go after them and look on again?"

"I'd just as soon stay here," said I.

"Would you? Oh, but everybody will be here directly, Mr. Vansittart!"

I nodded with understanding. "That's true," said I, offering my arm.

"I think you'll do, you know—some day," said Mrs. Duncan, as we went.

I thought myself that it was not bad—for a beginning. I daresay my look told my thought; for she laughed again.

"I'm much obliged for my lesson," said I, with a very significant glance.

"It was no trouble," she answered, with a demureness that hardly pretended to hide mischief.

"There they are!" I whispered, as we reached the conservatory.

"Yes, there they are!"

The tall man and the girl were standing in the middle of the conservatory talking. They did not appear now so engrossed in one another; indeed, their conversation seemed intermittent. Mrs. Duncan and I sat down.

"They're not amusing any longer," I observed.

"No," said Mrs. Duncan, absently.

Then a strange thing happened. The tall man stepped swiftly across, and said to Mrs. Duncan—

"Have you been to supper, Mrs. Duncan?"

"Well, no," said she, with a smile of mockery.

"Then, perhaps, you'll permit me——?"

"It's so late now."

"Not too late?" said the tall man, with a touch of entreaty in his tone.

"Well—not quite, perhaps."



"THE GIRL STOOD, BLANK AND ALONE."

She rose. "Good night, Mr. Vansittart. I hope we shall meet again."

She gave me her hand. I said nothing. They were gone! The girl stood, blank and alone. I stood opposite her. Then I

heard from the door, in Mrs. Duncan's voice—

"It was your own fault. Why did you talk to that child instead of me?"

There was a pause. Music began in the ball-room. The

"child" looked desolate. Maybe I felt desolate. We had not been introduced, but——

"May I have the pleasure of this with you?" I asked.

She started.

"Oh, yes, if you like," she said.

"Who was that fellow?" I asked.

"Mr. Templeman. Mrs. Duncan and he are—are great friends, you know."

"Great friends?"

"Yes; he's supposed to be going to marry her."

"And she?"

"Oh, she's ready enough," said the girl, scornfully. Then she looked at me; and she smiled. She said nothing; she smiled. I wished myself a thousand miles away; and still she smiled.

"Why are you smiling?" I asked, in desperation.

"I saw it all the time," said she. "If you're going to dance, come along."

I did not ask her what she had seen. I suppose she meant—the lesson.





"A LITTLE ANTIQUE SHIP OF WAR."

Brokers' Bay.

BY W. CLARK RUSSELL.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY SEPPINGS WRIGHT.

BROKERS' Bay is situated on the West Coast of England. You may search the map for it in vain, and the reason why I call it by any other name than that it bears will, when you have read this story, be as clear as the mud in the water that brims to the base of Brokers' cliffs. Brokers' Bay is a fine, curving sweep of land. For how many centuries the sea has been sneakingly ebbing from it who can imagine? The time has been when the galleon and the carack strained at their hempen ground tackle at anchors six fathoms deep where the white windmill now stands within musket-shot of the Crown and Anchor, and where the church spire darts the gleam of its weathercock above the green thickness of a huddle of dwarf trees near the little vicarage.



THE FORESHORE, BROKERS' BAY.

About fifty years ago a company of enterprising souls took it into their heads to reclaim some of the land which the subtly and ceaselessly ebbing sea, rising and falling with moon-like regularity, yet receding ever, though noticeably only in spans of half-centuries, was leaving behind it. They armed themselves with the necessary legal powers, they subscribed all the capital they considered needful, and by processes of embanking, draining, manuring and the like, they succeeded in raising wheat and grass, vegetables and flowers, where, since and long before the days of the painted Briton, shuddering in the November blast, or perspiring away his small clothes under the July sun, nothing had flourished but the dab and the crab.

Yet the speculation on the whole was a failure. It was a patriotic achievement in its way, and those concerned in it deserved well of the nation ; for if it be a fine thing to bleed for one's country, how much finer must it be to add to its dimensions, to enlarge its latitude and longitude, and extend the home-sovereignty of the monarch who happens to be seated on the throne at the time. Yet, though a pretty considerable village

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"MR. JERRY
CONSIDERED."

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local historian with when he came to write a guide-book and invent Roman and Early English names for the immediate district, and deal with the salubriousness of the climate, and give an analysis of the drinking water? And what about the bathing? There was none. And what length of pier would be wanted if the seaward end of it was to be permanently water-washed?



hard by the reclaimed land, houses increase. The builder, whose Christian Jerry, came down to Brokers' Bay, a look around, and went home again, nothing. He was not to be decoyed, Brokers' Bay was not the right sort of place to start a town in, he thought. There was too much mud, Mr. Jerry considered. He calculated that when the water was out there was a full mile and three-quarters of slime. Oh, yes, whilst the slime was still slimy it the sky just the same as if it had been it took a noble blood-red countenance sunset evening, when the sea was a pink streak just under the horizon, and it was in that sort of way. But what were going to say about all that mud, and nixies would a waste of slush, extending quarter miles at ebb tide, provide the

local historian with when he came to write a guide-book and invent Roman and Early English names for the immediate district, and deal with the salubriousness of the climate, and give an analysis of the drinking water? And what about the bathing? There was none. And what length of pier would be wanted if the seaward end of it was to be permanently water-washed?

The reclaimed ground was divided into lots for building ; but nobody built. The soil continued to be cultivated, nevertheless. Two market-gardeners did very well out of it. A butcher rented thirty acres of the pasture land ; the remainder was variously dealt with in small ways for growing purposes.

Now, that stretch of land had been reclaimed some fifteen years, when a certain master-mariner, whom I will call Captain Carey, arrived at the adjacent village with the intention of taking a view

of the Brokers' Bay foreshore. News that good land was cheap hereabouts had reached him up at Blyth. He had unexpectedly come into a little fortune, had Captain Carey. For years he had followed the coasting trade, working his way out through the fore-scuttle into the captain's cabin, and after thirty years of seafaring, rendered more and more uncomfortable by gloomy anticipations of the workhouse in his old age, he had been enriched by the will of an Australian aunt, the amount being something between £9,000 and £10,000.

Captain Carey had sprung from a West Country stock ; his wife was a West Country woman, and when they came into the Australian aunt's legacy they determined to break up their little home at Blyth and settle somewhere on Western soil. So Captain Carey came to Brokers' Bay, and with him travelled his giant son, a youth of prodigious muscle, but of weak intellect. A second Titan son was at this time at sea, working his way towards the quarter-deck aboard an East Indiaman.

Captain Carey's survey of the Brokers' foreshore determined him on purchasing a plot of land right amidships of the fine curve of reclaimed soil. He bought four acres at a very low figure indeed, and then ordered a small house to be built in the midst of his little estate. His wife and her niece joined him and the giant half-witted son at the adjacent village, and there the family dwelt at the sign of the Seven Bells whilst the house was building.

It was quickly put together, and was then gay with a green balcony, and it had motherly lubberly bay windows that made you think of a whaler's boats dangling at cranes, and the entrance was embellished with a singular porch after the design of the retired master-mariner, who had recollected seeing something of the sort at Lisbon when he had gone as a boy on a voyage to Portugal.

Captain Carey loved seclusion. Like most retired mariners, he hated to be overlooked. This fondness for privacy, which grows out of a habit of it, may be owing to there being no streets at sea, and no over-the-way. The master of a vessel lives in a cabin all



"A PLOT OF LAND RIGHT AMIDSHIPS."

alone by himself—the Crusoe of the after-part of the ship. He measures his quarter-deck in lonely walks ; no eyes glittering above the bulwark rail watch his movements ; his behaviour as a man, his judgment as a seaman, but not his mode of life as a private individual, are criticised by his crew. Hence, when a man steps ashore after a long period of command at sea, he carries with him a strong love of privacy, and much resolution of retirement. A great number of little cottages by the ocean are occupied by solitary seamen, who pass their time in looking through a telescope at the horizon, in arguing with lonesome men of their own cloth, in

smoking pipes at the Lugger Inn or at the sign of the Lord Nelson, and turning in at night and turning out in the morning.

To provide against being overlooked in case others should build hard by, Captain Carey walled his little estate of four acres with a regular bulkhead of a fence, handsomely spiked on top, and too tall for even his giant son to peer over on tiptoe. In a few months the house was built, papered, and in all ways completed ; it was then furnished and the ground fenced. Captain Carey and his family now took possession of their new home. There was first of all Captain Carey, then Mrs. Carey, next the giant young Carey (who had been known up in Blyth by the name of Mother Carey's chicken), and last, Mrs. Carey's niece, a stout, active girl of twenty, who helped Mrs. Carey in cooking and looking after the house ; for Carey having been robbed, whilst absent on a coasting voyage, of a new coat, a soft hat, a meerschaum

pipe, and a few other trifles by a maid-of-all-work, had sworn in hideous forecastle language never again to keep another servant.

This happy family of Careys were very well pleased with their new home. Old Carey was never weary of stepping out of doors to look at his house. He seemed to find something fresh to admire every time he cast his eyes over the little building. He and his son planted potatoes, onions, cabbages, and other homely



MRS. CAREY'S NIECE.

vegetables, and dug out and cultivated a very considerable area of kitchen garden. They had not above three miles to walk to attend divine worship. There were several convenient shops in the adjacent village, not more than two miles and a-half distant. There was no roadway to speak of to Carey's house, but in a very few weeks the feet of the family and the tread of the tradespeople tramped out a thin path over the reclaimed land to the village roadway, where it fell with the sweep of the cliff to the level of the reclaimed soil. And the view, on the whole, from Carey's windows was fairly picturesque and pleasing, even when the water was out and the scene was a sweeping flat of mud. Afar on the dark blue edge of the sea hovered the feather-white canvas of ships, easily resolved into denominationable fabrics by Carey's powerful telescope. The western sun glowed in the briny ooze till the whole stretch of the stuff resembled a vast surface of molten gold. Here and there, confronting Carey's house, stood some scores of fangs of rock, and when there was a flood-tide and a fresh in-shore gale the sea snapped and beat and burst upon the beach with as much uproar as though it were all fathomless ocean, instead of a dirty stretch of water with an eighteen-foot rise of tide, and foam so dark and thick with dirt that, after it had blown upon you and dried, it was as though you had ridden through some dozen miles of muddy lanes.



"OLD CAREY'S NEW HOUSE."

The family had been settled about three months when the eldest son arrived home from the long voyage he had made to China and the East Indies. He was a tall, powerfully-built young man; but his education in his youth had been neglected. Captain Carey, indeed, had not in those days possessed the means to put him to school. Now, however, that the skipper had come into a little fortune of, call it, £10,000, he resolved to qualify his son for a position on the quarter-deck.

"Navigation I can teach him," he said to his wife, "and if he was a master-rigger he couldn't know more about a ship. What he wants is the sort of larning which you and me's deficient in :

the being able to talk and write good English, with some sort of knowledge of history and the likes of that ; so that, should he ever get command of a passenger ship, why, then, sitting at the head of the cabin table, he won't be ashamed of addressing the ladies and joining in the general conversation."

So when this son arrived from China and the East Indies, the father, instead of sending him to sea again, put him to read and study with a clergyman who lived in the adjacent village, a gentleman who could not obtain a living and who disdained a curacy.

Thus it came to pass that Captain Carey lived at home with his two sons and wife and wife's niece.

He stood in a bay window one day, and it entered his head to dig out a pond and place a fountain in the middle of it.



"It'll improve the property," said Captain Carey, turning to his wife and sons, who were lingering at the breakfast table. "We'll fix a pedestal amidsthips of the pond and put a female statue upon it—one of them white figures who keep

their right hands aloft for the holding of a whirligig fountain. There's nothing prettier than a revolving fountain a-sparkling and a-showering down over a noode statue."

"You'll be striking salt water, father, if you fall a-digging," said the sailor son named Tom.

"And what then?" exclaimed Captain Carey. "Ain't brine as bright to the eye as fresh water? And it's not going to choke the fountain either. Blessed if I don't think the fountain might be set a-playing by the rise and fall of the tide."

When breakfast was ended the father and the two sons stepped out of doors to decide upon a spot in which to dig the pond for the fountain. After much discussion they agreed to dig in front of the house, about a hundred paces distant, within a stone's throw of the wash of the water when the tide was at its height.

The Captain's grounds lay open to the sea, though they were jealously fenced, as has been already said, at the back and on either hand. There could be no intrusion on the sea-fronting portion of the grounds. The mud came to the embankment, and the

embankment was the ocean-limit of Carey's little estate. There was no path, and no right of way if there had been. Selkirk and his goats could scarcely have enjoyed greater seclusion than did Carey and his family. The father and sons proposed to dig out the pond to the shape, depth, and area decided upon, and then bring in a mason to finish it. They went to work next day; it was something to do—something to kill the time which, perhaps, now and again lay a little heavy upon this isolated family. The old skipper dug with vehemence and enjoyment. He had been bred to a life of hard work, and was never happier than when toiling. His giant half-witted son laboured with the energy of steam. The sailor son stepped in when he had done with his parson and his studies for the day and drove his spade into the reclaimed soil with enthusiasm. This went on for several days, and something that resembled the idea of a pond without any water in it began to suggest itself to the eye.

It was on a Friday afternoon in the month of April, as the Captain whom I am calling Carey himself informed me, that this retired skipper, who had not felt well enough that day to dig, was seated in his parlour reading a newspaper and smoking a pipe. Suddenly the door was flung open, and the giant half-witted youth whose name was Jack walked in.

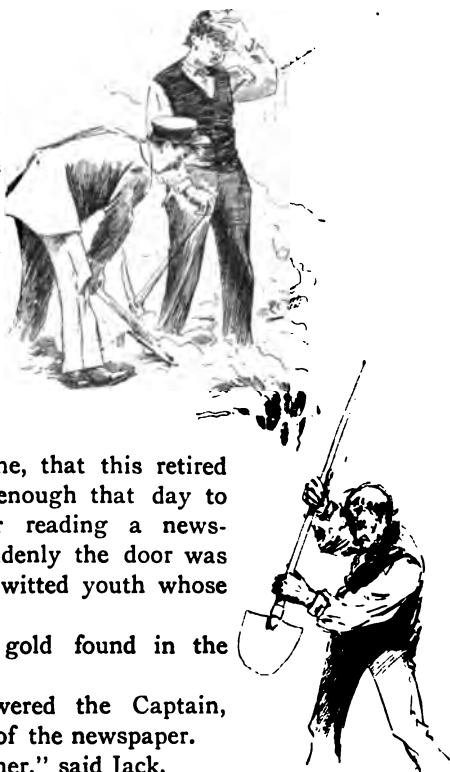
"Father," said he, "ain't gold found in the earth?"

"Nowhere else, sonny," answered the Captain, looking at the giant over the top of the newspaper.

"There's gold in the pond, father," said Jack.

"Gold in your eye!" exclaimed the Captain, putting down his pipe and his newspaper. "What sort of gold?" said he, smiling.

"Shiny gold, like the half-sovereign you wance gave me for behavin' myself when you was away."



On this, Captain Carey, without another word, put on his hat and walked with his son to the diggings, which were by this time a pretty considerable trench.

"There," said Jack, pointing, "my spade drove upon him, and I've scraped that much clear."

The Captain looked, and perceived what resembled a fragment of a shaft of metal, dull and yellow, with lines of brightness where Jack's spade had scraped the surface. He at once jumped into the trench and bade Jack fetch his spade. They then dug together, and in about a quarter of an hour succeeded in laying bare a small brass cannon of very antique pattern and manufacture. It was pivoted. They dug a little longer and deeper, and exposed a portion of woodwork. The scantling was extraordinarily thick, and the gun was pivoted to it. The Captain's face was red with excitement.

"Run and see if Tom's in," he cried, "and if he ain't, leave word that he's to join us with his spade as soon as he arrives, and then come you back, Jack. By the great anchor, if here ain't a foundered ship call me a guffy!"



"GOLD IN YOUR EYE!"

The sailor son, armed with a spade, appeared on the scene within twenty minutes.

"It's an old brass swivel, father," he shouted.

"Jump in," cried the Skipper, "and lend's a hand to clear away more of this muck."

The three plied their spades with might and main, and before sundown they had laid bare some eight feet of ship's deck, with about five feet breadth of bulwark, measuring four feet high from the plank. Mrs. Carey and the niece came to the edge of the pit to look. The three diggers, covered with sweat and hot as fire, climbed out, threw down their spades, and the family stood gazing.

"Whatever is it?" cried Mrs. Carey.

"A foundered ship," answered her husband.

"A whole ship, uncle?" exclaimed the niece.

"A three hundred ton ship," answered the Skipper. "D'ye want to know if she's all here? I can't tell you that; but if there

ain't solidness enough for a Ryle Jarge running fore and aft in this unearthed piece, I'm no sailor man."

"What sort of ship will she be?" said the half-witted Jack.

"Something two hundred year old, if the whole job hain't some antiquarian roose like to the burying of Roman baths for the digging of 'em up again as an advertisement for the place. Who was a-reigning two hundred year ago?"

Here every eye was directed at the sailor son, who, after rubbing his nose and looking hard at the horfzon, answered, "Crummell."



"AN OLD BRASS SWIVEL."

"Then it's a ship of Crummell's time," cried the Captain, to whom the name of Crummell did not seem familiar, "and if so be she's all here and intact, bloomed if she won't be a fortune to us as a show."

That night, both at and after supper, all the talk of the family was about the foundered ship in the garden. The giant lad's excitement was such that even the mother owned to herself he had never been more fluent and imbecile.

"D'ye think it's a whole ship, father?" said Tom the sailor.

"More'n likely. That there brass cannon ought to give us her age. Haven't I heered tell of a Spanish invasion of this country in bygone years, when the Dons was blowed to the nor'rad, and a score of their galleons cast away upon the British coasts? At a time like this a man feels not being a scholard. Tom, fetch down your history book, and see if there's a piece wrote in it about that there Spanish job."

The sailor brought a history of England to the lamp, and with fingers square-ended as broken carrots, and with palms dark with dragging upon tarry ropes, groped patiently through the pages till he came to a part of the story that told of the Spanish Armada. This was read aloud, and the family listened with attention.

"Well, she may prove to be one of them Spanish galleons after all," said Captain Carey. "She'll not be the first ship that's been dug up out of land which the sea's flowed over in its day. There was Jimmy Perkins of Sunderland—" and here he spun them a yarn.

"What'll be inside the ship, I wonder?" exclaimed the niece.

"Ah!" said the young giant Jack, opening his mouth.

"Them galleons went pretty richly freighted, I've heered," said the Skipper. "When I was a boy they used to tell of their going

afloat with a store of dollars in their holds, their bottoms flush to the hatches with the choicest goods, gold and silver candlesticks and crucifixes in the cabins for the captains and mates to say their prayers afore."

"Jacky thought the cannon gold," said Mrs. Carey. "He may be right, Thomas, though a little quick in finding out. There may be gold deeper down."

"Well, now," cried the Skipper. "I'll tell you what I've made up my mind to do. We'll keep this here find a secret. Tom, you, me and Jack'll go to work day arter day until we see what lies buried. There's no call for any of us to say a word about this discovery. We're pretty well out of sight, the fence stands high, and if so be as any visitor or tradesman should catch a view of the trench they'll not be able to see what's inside without drawing close to the brink, which, of course, won't be permitted. If that foundered craft," he cried, with great excitement, pointing towards the window, "is intact, as I before observed, then let her hold contain what it may, all mud or all dollars, all slush or all silk, as a show she ought to be worth a matter



"THERE'S TO BE NO DIVIDING."

of a thousand pound to us. But not a word to anybody till we've looked inside of her. If there's treasure, why, it's to be ourn. There's to be no dividing of it with the authorities, and so I says plainly, let the law be what it will. Here's this house and grounds to be paid for, Tom to be eddicated and sent to sea in a ship he holds a share in, Jack to be made independent of me, and Eliza to be provided for; and we'll see," he shouted, hitting the table a blow with his clenched fist, "if that there foundered ship ain't a-going to work out this traverse the same as if she was chock-a-block with bullion."

Thus was the procedure settled, and next morning early the father and two sons went to work with their spades.

It was to prove a long, laborious job; they knew *that*, but were determined all the same to keep the strange business in the family, and to solve the secret of the buried craft as darkly

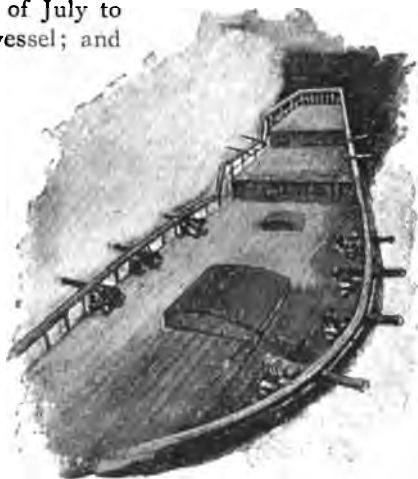
and mysteriously as though they were bent upon perpetrating some deed of horror. The quantity of soil they threw up formed an embankment which concealed the trench and their own labouring figures as they progressed. Tom went away to his studies for two or three hours in the day; saving this and the interruption of mealtimes their toil was unintermittent. In three weeks they had disclosed enough of the poop-royal, poop and quarter-deck of the strangely-shaped craft to satisfy them that, at all events, a very large portion of the after part of the vessel lay solid in its centuries' old grave of mud.

In this time they had exhumed and scraped the whole breadth or beam of her upper decks to a distance of about twenty-two feet forward from the taffrail. Their notion was to clear her from end to end betwixt the lines of her bulwarks, only to satisfy themselves that she was a whole ship. Day after day they laboured in their secret fashion, and the people of the district never for an instant imagined that they were at work on anything more than an entrenchment of extraordinary size, depth and length, for some purpose known only to themselves.

It took them to the middle of July to expose the upper decks of the vessel; and

then there lay, a truly marvellous and even beautiful sight, buried some ten feet below the level of the soil, the complete and quite perfect fabric of a little antique ship of war, about one hundred feet long and thirty feet broad, with two after decks or poops descending like steps to the quarter-deck, and the bows shelving downwards like the slope of a beach into what promised to prove a complicated curling of headboards and some nightmare device of figure-head.

Four little brass cannons were pivoted on the poop rails, and on her main deck she mounted eight guns of that ancient sort called sakers. The wood of her was as hard as iron, and black as old oak with the saturation of soil and brine and time's secret hardening process. The masts were clean gone from the deck, and there was no sign of a bowsprit. Never was



"A LITTLE ANTIQUE SHIP OF WAR."

there a more wonderful picture than that ancient ship as she lay in her grave with her grin of old-work artillery running the fat squab length of her, the old structure, flat still in the soil to the level of the bulwark rails, affecting the eye as some marvellous illusion of nature; as some wild, romantic vegetable or mineral caprice of the drained but sodden soil.

Our little family of diggers, having disentombed the decks and bulwarks to the whole length of the giant Jack's extraordinary discovery, next proceeded, all as secretly as though they were preparing for some hideous crime, to uproot the covers of the main hatch, which were as hard fixed as though they had been of Portland stone cemented into a pier. With much hammering, however—and they were three powerful men—they succeeded in splitting the

cover, and the stubborn, wonderful old piece of timber-frame was picked out of the yawn of the hatch in splinters. And now they looked down into a black well, from which, however, Captain Carey speedily withdrew his head, sniffing and spitting.



"THEY LOOKED DOWN INTO A BLACK WELL."

"Run for a candle, Jack," said he. A candle was lighted and lowered, and when it had sunk half a dozen feet the flame went out as though the wick had been suddenly pinched by the fingers of a spirit. So that a current of air should sweeten the hold, they went aft with their hatchets

and hammers, and, after prodigious labour, splintered and cleared away the cover of a little booby hatch just under the break of the lower poop. They next got open the small fore hatch, and at the end of two days, when they lowered a lighted candle, the flame burnt freely.

Now what did they find inside this buried ship? Carey had counted upon mud to the hatchways, and scores of curios and amazing relics of Crummell's or another's period to be dug out of the solid mass. Instead, the interior was as dry as a nut whose kernel has rotted into dust. *This* was as extraordinary as any other feature of the discovery. The three men, each bearing a lighted lantern, descended the ladder they had lowered through the

hatch, and gained the bottom of the ship, where they walked upon what had undoubtedly been cargo in its time, though it might now have passed for a sort of dunnage of lava, dry, harsh, and gritty, and powdering under the tread. A basket was loaded with the stuff, and hoisted into the daylight and examined, but the family could make nothing of it. As far as could be gathered the original freight of the ship had been bale goods, skins, fine wool and the like, East India or Spice Island commodities, which some sort of chemical action had transformed into a heap of indistinguishable stuff, as slender in comparison with its radical bulk as the cinders of a rag to the rag that is burnt.

"Nothing to make our fortunes with here," said Captain Carey, as he stood in the bottom of this wonderful old ship's hold with his two sons, the three of them holding up their lanterns and glancing with gleaming eyes and marvelling minds around. "What's abaft that bulkhead? We'll see to it arter dinner."

They went to dinner, and then returned to the ship, and applied themselves to hacking at the bulkhead so as to effect an entry. This bulkhead, which partitioned the after from the main and fore-holds, was of the hardness of steel. They let fly at it in vain. The hollow hold reverberated the blows of axe and chopper with the clangour of an iron ship-building yard.

"We must enter by an after hatch if it's to be done," said Captain Carey.

With infinite labour, which expended the day and ran into the whole of the following morning, they contrived to break their way through the front of the lower poop. Here the air was as foul as ever it had been in the hold. They could do nothing for many hours. When at last the atmosphere was sweet enough to breathe they entered, and found themselves in a cabin that was unusually lofty owing to the superstructure of the poop-royal,



"'NOTHING TO MAKE OUR FORTUNES WITH HERE.'"

The interior was as dry as the hold had been. So effectually had accident or contrivance, or the secret processes of the ship's grave, sealed every aperture that, standing in this now wind-swept cabin, you might have supposed the little fabric had never shipped a bucketful of water from the hour of her launch. Several human skeletons lay upon the deck. The Captain and his sons held the lanterns to the bones, and handled the rags which had been their raiment, but the colourless stuff went to pieces. It mouldered in the grasp as dry sand streams from the clenched fist.

Five cabins were bulkheaded off this black, long-buried interior.



"SEVERAL HUMAN SKELETONS LAY UPON
THE DECK."

The Captain and his sons searched them, but every thing that was not of timber appeared to have undergone the same transformation that was visible in what had doubtless been the cargo in the hold. They found chairs of a venerable pattern, cresset-like lamps, such as Milton describes, bunk bedsteads, upon which were faintly distinguishable the tracings of what might have been paintings and gilt-work.

"What d'ye think of this, boys, for a show?" cried Captain, whose voice was tremulous with excitement and astonishment. "If there ain't two thousand pounds in the job as a sight-going consarn, tell me we're all a-dreaming, and that the whole boiling's a lie. And now to see what's under hatches here."

A small square of hatchway was visible just abaft the black oblong table that centred the interior. They opened this hatch without much labour. The cementing process of the ship's grave had not apparently worked very actively in this cabin, yet the foul air of the after-hold forced them once more upon no less than three days of inactivity; for to sweeten the place they were obliged to construct a windsail, whose breezy heel rendered the atmosphere fit for human respiration in a few hours.

On descending they found just such another accumulation of lava-like remains of freight as they had met with in the main

hold. But they noticed a bulkhead ten feet abaft the sternpost. They chopped their way through it and stood for awhile peering around them under the lanterns which they held above their heads. The gleams illuminated a quantity of ancient furniture—sofas and chairs and little tables, and framed squares and ovals of obliterated paintings. Captain Carey put his hand upon a couch and drew his fist away with a handful of pale and rotted upholstery.

"Are those things cases yonder?" said the sailor son, and the three of them made their way to a corner of the hold and stood looking for a moment or two at four square chests heavily clamped with iron.

"What's here?" said Captain Carey.

The giant Jack stooped and strove to stir one of the boxes.

"Stand aside!"

roared the Skipper, and with half a dozen strokes of his axe, he split open the lid of one of the chests.

The three faces came together in a huddle, and the light shone upon lines of linked and

"Pick one of 'em

Carey, in a faint voice, "my hands are a-trembling too much to do it."

They were Spanish silver coins, subsequently ascertained to have been minted in times which proved the age of this sunken and recovered ship contemporaneous with the early years of the reign of our Second Charles. Captain Carey told me that he realised £6,400 on them.

But this lucky family did better yet with their incredible discovery; for after the Captain had secreted the money in his house, he called in workmen, who dug away the soil from the buried ship until she was exposed to the bilge on which she rested. This done, he carried out his resolution to make a show of her by erecting a shed for the fabric, stationing a doorkeeper at the entrance, and charging sixpence for admission. Many hundreds, indeed many thousands, came from all parts to view the wonderful ship, that was ascertained, by a well-known expert in naval affairs, to have



"THE THREE FACES
CAME TOGETHER."

minted metal.

up, Tom," said Captain

been the *Sancte Ineas*, captured by the privateer *Amazon*, and lost whilst proceeding in charge of a prize crew to an English port. It was further discovered that her lading had consisted of coffee, cochineal, indigo, hides in the hair, bales of fine wool and fur. But down to this hour it was never known that Captain Carey had found hidden, and, in course of time, cleverly turned into good English money, four chests of Spanish silver, worth, at all events to this happy family of Brokers' Bay, £6,400. For my own part, I have honourably kept my worthy friend's secret.





Lines writ on an old Dial.

Here stand I ever lonely, amidst the flow'ry tall
 While o'er my figured bosom long shadows faintly fall
 And to the passing world, whose life by hours I keep
 I say - 'tis time to rise & then - 'tis time to sleep.

H. M. G. E. A. I.

To an "Advanced Woman."

BY F. MABELLE PEARSE.



"MANFUL COAT AND HAT."

DIVINEST Woman, shall I dare in humble
rhyme to praise thee,

Can words depict thy modern charm of manful
coat and hat?

Thy muscle and thy intellect! the ardours that up-
raise thee!

Thy newness day by day! thy mission! but I
may not speak of that.

Reformer lion-hearted,

With fashion hast thou parted,

Thy unkempt locks lie limply on thy clear and classic
head:

In hygienic clothing,

A waist and heels deep-loathing,

Thy unstayed figure freely flounders, knickerbockerèd.

With journalistic intellect and mind inquiring, fear-
less

Of man or devil, heav'n or hell, or even Mrs.
Grundy:

To church thou dost but seldom go, nor lov'st the
Abbey peerless;

Soul-anchored at the Ethical I see thee oft on
Sunday.

Or in occult meditation,

Deep in lore of Eastern nation,

Thou followest the astral track of a Besant or a
Stead:

Intellectual gyrations,

Mazes of re-incarnations,

Close wreathe their mystic spells around thy unbe-
wildered head.



"WITH JOURNALISTIC INTELLECT"

In fiction though we seek thee not, full many a time
we've found thee,

With chapters of opinions, but a saving love of dress.

Thy heart is all platonic, though thy suitors flock
around thee,

And the grave and simple-minded is
made graver by thy "Yes."

But—if man finds it
well-o

To wed an Aster Yel-
low,

Or dream Superfluous Woman is to wealth and
title blind :

Should he fancy a Marcella,
With her views and lands at
Mellor,

I would trust he may be happy—I would pray
she may be kind.



"THY HEART IS ALL PLATONIC."

O woman of the period, thy accomplishments are legion !

To lecture or to skirt-dance, to frivol or to fight,

To pioneer, to educate, to nurse the leprous region,

—These thy pastimes—but a graver, sweeter task is thy
delight :

To proclaim to Man salvation,
Through Woman's mediation :

To show Earth's highest progress through the Woman-
soul is found :

Man as intellect material,
Thou as spirit all ethereal,

"PROCLAIM TO MAN SALVATION." Ah! 'tis Woman—Woman—Woman—that makes
the world go round.





"CAME ON LIKE A SWALLOW."

The Lake of the Great Slave.

BY GILBERT PARKER.

ILLUSTRATED BY STANLEY L. WOOD.

WHEN Tybalt the tale-gatherer asked why it was so called, Pierre said: "Because of the Great Slave;" and then paused.

Tybalt did not hurry Pierre, knowing his whims. If he wanted to tell, he would in his own time; if not, nothing could draw it from him. It was near an hour before Pierre eased off from the puzzle he was solving with bits of paper, and obliged Tybalt. He began as if they had been speaking the moment before:

"They have said it is legend, but I know better. I have seen the records of the Company*, and it is all there. I was at Fort O'Glory, and in a box two hundred years old the Factor and I found it. Along with the records were other papers, and some of them had large red seals and a name scrawled along the bottom of the page."

Pierre shook his head, as if in pleasant musing. He was a born story-teller. Tybalt was aching with interest, and he scented a thing of note.

"How did any of those papers, signed with a scrawl, begin?" he said.

"*'To our dearly-beloved,'* or something like that," answered Pierre. "There were letters also, and two of them were full of harsh words, and these were signed with the scrawl."

"What was that scrawl?" asked Tybalt.

Pierre stooped to the sand, and wrote two words with his finger. "Like that," he answered.

Tybalt looked intently for an instant, and then drew a long breath. "*Charles Rex*," he said, hardly above his breath.

Pierre gave him a suggestive side-long glance. "That name was droll, eh?"

Tybalt's blood was tingling with the joy of discovery. "It is a great name," he said, shortly.

"The Slave was great—the Indians said so at the last."

* The Hudson's Bay Company.

"But that was not the name of the Slave?"

"*Mais, non.* Who said so? *Charles Rex*—like that! was the man who wrote letters to the other."

"To the Great Slave?"

Pierre made a gesture of impatience. "Very sure."

"Where are those letters now?"

"They have gone to the Governor of the Company."

Tybalt cut the tobacco for his pipe savagely.

"You'd have liked one of those papers?" asked Pierre, provokingly.

"I'd give five hundred dollars for one!" broke out Tybalt.

Pierre lifted his eyebrows.

"T'sh, what's the good of



"YOU'D HAVE LIKED ONE OF THOSE PAPERS?"

five hundred dollars up here? What would you do with a letter like that?"

Tybalt laughed, with a touch of irony, for Pierre was clearly "rubbing it in."

"Perhaps for a book?" gently asked Pierre.

"Yes, if you like."

"It is a pity. But there is a way."

"How?"

"Put me in the book. Then——"

"How does that touch the case?"

Pierre shrugged a shoulder gently, for he thought Tybalt was unusually obtuse. Tybalt thought so himself before the episode was over.

"Go on," he said, with clouded brow, but interested eye. Then, as if a thought had suddenly come to him: "To whom were the letters addressed, Pierre?"

"Wait!" was the reply. "One letter said: '*Good cousin, We are evermore glad to have thee and thy most excelling mistress near us. So, fail us not at our cheerful doings, yonder at Highgate.*' Another—a year after—said: '*Cousin, for the sweetening of our mind, get thee gone into some distant corner of our pasturage—the farthest doth please us most. We would not have thee on foreign ground, for we bear no ill to our brother princes, and yet we would not have thee near our garden of good loyal souls, for thou hast a rebel heart and a tongue of divers tunes—thou lovest not the good old song of duty to thy prince. Obeying us, thy lady shall keep thine estates untouched; failing obedience, thou wilt make more than thy prince unhappy. Fare thee well.*' That was the way of two letters," said Pierre.

"How do you remember so?"

Pierre shrugged a shoulder again. "It is easy with things like that."

"But word for word?"

"I learned it word for word."

"Now for the story of the Lake—if you won't tell me the name of the man."

"The name afterwards—perhaps. Well, he came to the farthest corner of the pasturage, to the Hudson's Bay Country, two hundred years ago. What do you think? Was he so sick of all, that he would go so far he could never get back? Maybe those '*cheerful doings*' at Highgate, eh? And the lady—who can tell?"

Tybalt reached over and seized Pierre's arm with a sudden conviction. "You know more. Good Heavens, can't you see I'm on needles to hear! Was there anything in the letters about the lady? anything more than you've told?"

Pierre liked no man's hand on him, and seldom did he put his hand on any man. He liked it no better because Tybalt was of higher social place than himself, nor because the grasp was friendly. He glanced down at the eager hand, and then said coldly:

"You are a great man. You can tell a story in many ways, but I in one way alone, and that is my way—*mais oui!*"

"Very well, Pierre, have it so, and take your own time; only tell me all you know."

"*Bien.* I got the story from two heads. If you hear a thing like that from Indians, you call it 'legend'; if from the Company's papers, you call it 'history.' Well, in this there is not much difference between. The papers tell precise the facts; the legend tells how, gives the feeling, is more true. How can you judge of facts if you don't know the feeling? No! what is bad becomes good sometimes, when you know the how, the feeling, the place. If I were a writing man like you I would think of that often. Well, this story of the Great Slave. There is a race of Indians in the far North who have hair so brown as yours, monsieur, and eyes no darker. It is said they are a batch of those who lived at the Pole, before the sea broke over the Isthmus, and swallowed up so many islands. *Bien*, in those days the fair race came to the South for the first time, that is, far below the Circle. They had their women with them. I have seen those of to-day, fine and tall, with breasts like apples, and a cheek to tempt a man like you, monsieur; no grease in the hair—no, Monsieur Tybalt!"

Tybalt sat moveless under the not very delicate irony, but his eyes were fixed intently on Pierre, his mind ever travelling far ahead of the tale.

"*Et puis:* The 'good cousin' of Charles Rex, he made a journey with two men over to the far-off Metal River, the place of the Sardonyx Stone, and one day this tribe from the North came on his camp. It was summer, and they were camping in the Valley of the Young Moon, more sweet, they say, than any in the North. The Indians cornered them. There was a fight, and one of the Company's men was killed, and five of the other. But when the King of the People of the Pole saw that the great man was fair of face, he called for the fight to stop.

"Now, there was a big talk all by signs, and the King said for the great man to come with them, and be one with them, for they loved his fair face—their forefathers were fair like him. He should have the noblest of their women for his wife, and be a prince among them. He would not go, so they drew away again and fought. A stone-axe brought the great man to the ground. But he was stunned, not killed.

Then the other man gave up, and said he would be one of them if they would take him. They would have killed him but for one of their women. She said that he should live to tell them



Stanley L Wood,
74

"HE WAS STUNNED."

tales of the South Country and the Strange People, when they came again to their camp-fires. So they let him live, and he was one of them. But the chief man, because he was stubborn and scorned them, and because he had killed the son of their King in the fight, they made a slave, and carried him North a captive, till they came to this lake—the Lake of the Great Slave.

"In all ways they tried him, but he would not yield, neither to wear their dress, nor to worship their gods, nor to follow after the sayings of their Medicine-Man. So that, when his clothes were taken away, his gold-handled dagger, his belt of silk and silver, his carbine with rich chasing, and all, he was among them almost naked,—it was summer, as I said—yet defying them. He was very tall—taller by a head than any of the other men, and his white skin showed like marble and rippled like soft steel."

Tybalt felt inclined to ask Pierre how he knew all this, but he held his peace. Pierre, however, as if divining his thoughts, went on :

"You ask how I know these things. *Bien*, there are the legends. The people have told me, and there were the papers of the Company. They had tried every way, but it was no use ; he would have nothing to say to them. At last they came to this lake. Now something great occurred. The woman who had been the wife of the King's dead son, her heart went out in love of the Great Slave, but he never looked at her. One day

there were great sports, for it was the feast of the Red Star. The young men did feats of strength, here on this ground where we sit. The King's wife, with a clear voice, called out for the Great Slave to measure strength with them all. He would not stir. The King commanded him ; still he would not, but stood among them silent and looking over their heads, as if not thinking of them. At last, two young men of good height and sinew taunted him and threw arrows at his bare breast. The blood came in spots. Then he gave a cry through his beard, and was on them like a lion. He caught them, one in each arm, swung them from the ground, and brought their heads together with a crash, breaking their skulls, and dropped them at his feet. Then seizing a long spear, he waited for the rest. But they did not come, for, with a loud voice, the King told them to fall back, and went and felt the bodies of the men. One of them was dead ; the other was his second son—he would live.

“ ‘It is a great deed,’ said the King, ‘for these were no children, but strong men.’

“Then again he offered the Great Slave women to marry, and fifty tents of good deerskin for the making of a village, if he would be one with them. But the Great Slave said no, making it clear that all he wished was to get back to Fort O'Glory.

“It was not to be. The King refused. But that night, as he slept in his tent, the girl-widow came to him, waked him, and told him to come with her. He came forth, and she led him softly through the silent camp to the wood over there, where I point. She entered the wood with him. He told her she need go no further. Without a word, she reached over and kissed him on the breast. Then he understood. He told her that she could not come with him, for there was that lady in England—his wife, eh? But never mind, that will come. He was too great to save his life or be free at the price. Some are born that way. They have their own commandments, and they keep them.

“He told her that she must go back. She gave a little cry, and came huddling to his feet in a swoon. He would not leave her so, but stooped, and tried to bring her back. Soon she opened her eyes, then gave a start, and, before she quite knew who he was, said something strange. From this he knew she would be in danger if she went back.

“So then he told her to come, for it was in his mind to

bring her to Fort O'Glory, where she could marry an Indian there. But now she would not go with him, but turned towards the village. A woman is a strange creature—yes, like that! She did not know him. Now he refused to go. She was in danger, and he would share it, whatever it might be. So, though she prayed, he went back with her; and when she saw that he would go in spite of all, she was glad: which is like a woman.

"When he entered the tent again, he guessed her danger, for he stepped over the bodies of two dead men. She had killed them. As she turned at the door to go to her own tent, another woman faced her. It was the wife of the King, who had suspected and now discovered. Who can tell what it was? Jealousy, perhaps. The Great Slave could tell, maybe, if he could speak, for a man always knows when a woman sets him high. But, anyhow, that was the way it stood. In a moment the girl was marched back to her tent, and all the camp heard a tale, not true, of the widow of the King's son.

"To it there was an end after the way of their laws. The woman should die by fire, and the man as the King might will. It was the law, and it must be so. So there was a great gathering in the place where we are, and the King sat against that big white stone, which

is now as it was then. Then silence was called and the girl-widow was brought forth. The King spoke:

"Thou, who had'st a prince for thy husband, hast gone in the night to the tent of a slave, the slave who killed thy husband, whereby thou also becomest a slave, and shamest the greatness which was given thee. Thou shalt die, as has been set in our law."

"At that the girl-widow rose. 'I did not know, O King, whom I once called father, that he whom thou mad'st a slave slew my husband, the prince of our people and thy son. That was not told me. But had I known it, still would I have set



him free, for thy son was killed in fair battle, and this man deserves not slavery or torture. That I did seek the tent of the Great Slave is true, but it was to set him free. For that did I go, and, for the rest, my soul is open to the Spirit Who Sees. And I have done naught, and never did, nor ever will, that might shame a King, or the daughter of a King, or the wife of a King, or a woman. If to set a noble captive free is death, then am I ready. And I will answer all pure women

in the far Camp of the Great Fires without fear. There is no more, O King, that I may say, but this : she who dies by fire, being of noble blood, may choose who shall light the fagots—is it not so ?'

"Then the King replied : 'It is so. Such is our law.'

"After that there was counselling between the King and his oldest men, and so long were they handing the matter back and forth that it looked as if she might go free. But the King's wife, seeing, came and spoke to the King and the others, crying out for the honour of her dead son ; so that in a moment of temper they all declared for death.

"When the King said again to the girl that she must die by fire, she answered : 'It is as the Spirit wills. But it is so, as I said, that I may choose who shall light the fires?'

"The King answered yes, and asked her whom she chose. She turned to where the Great Slave stood, and pointed. And all, even the King and his councillors, won-

dered, because they knew little of the heart of women. What is a man with a matter like that? Nothing—nothing at all. They would have set this for punishment. That she should ask for it was beyond them. Yes, even the King's wife—it was beyond her. But the girl herself, *Voyes*, was it not this way?—If she died by the hand of him she loved, then it would be



"SHE GAVE A LITTLE CRY."

easy, for she could forget the pain in the thought that his heart would ache for her, and that at the very last he might care, and she should see it. Ah, she was great in her way, also—that girl, two hundred years ago.

“*Alors*, they led the girl a little distance off,—there is the spot, where you see the ground heave a little,—and the Great Slave was brought up. The King told him why the girl was to die. He went like stone, looking, looking at them. He knew that the girl’s heart was like a flower or a little child’s, and the shame of the thing, the cruelty of it, froze him silent for a minute, and the colour flew from his face to here and there on his body, like a flame on marble. After a little the cords began to beat and throb in his neck and on his forehead, and his eyes gave out fire like flint on an arrow-head.

“Then he began to talk. He could not say much, for he knew so little of their language. But it was ‘No!’ every other word. ‘No—no—no—no!’ the words ringing from his chest. ‘She is good!’ he said. ‘The other—no!’ and he made a motion with his hand. ‘She must not die—no! Evil? It is a lie! I will kill each man one by one who says so if he dares come forth. She tried to save me—well?’ Here he made a fine motion and drew himself up. Then he made them know that he was of high place in a far country, and that a man like him would not tell a lie. And that pleased the King, for he was proud, and he saw that the Slave was better stuff than himself. Besides, the King was a brave man, and he had strength, and more than once he had laid his hand on the chest of the other, as one might on a grand animal. Perhaps, even then, they might have spared the girl if it was not for the Queen. She would not hear of it. Then they tried the Great Slave. Because the girl was found guilty, he must be found so. The Queen sent him word to beg for pardon. So he stood out and spoke to the Queen. She sat up straight, with pride in her eyes, for was it not a great prince (as she thought) pleading? But all at once a cloud fell on her face, for he asked for pardon for the girl. Since there must be death, let him die, and die by fire in her place! At that two women cried out—the poor girl for joy, not at the thought that her life would be saved, but because she thought the man loved her now, or he would not offer to die for her; and the Queen for hate, because she thought the same. You can guess the rest: they were both to die, though the King was sorry for the man.

"Now the King's speaker came out and asked them if they had anything to say. The girl stepped forward, her face without any fear, but a kind of noble pride in it, and said, 'I am ready, O King.'



"The Great Slave bowed his head, and seemed thinking much. They asked him again, and he waved his hand at them. Then the King spoke up in anger, and he smiled and said: 'O King, I am not ready; if I die, I die.' Then he fell to thinking again. But once more the King spoke: 'Thou shalt surely die, but not by fire, nor now; not till we have come to our great camp in our own country. There thou shalt die. But the woman shall die at the going down of the sun. She shall die by fire, and thou shalt light the fagots for the burning.'

"At this the Great Slave said that he would not do it, not if he died a hundred deaths, each worse than the last. Then the King said that it was the woman's right to choose who should start the fire, and he had given his word, which should not be broken.

"When the Great Slave heard this he was wild for a little, and then he guessed altogether what was in the girl's mind. Was not this the true thing in her, the very truest? *Mais, oui!* That was what she wished—to die by his hand rather than by any other; and something troubled his breast, and a cloud gathered at his eyes, so that for a moment he could not see. He looked at the girl, so serious, eye to eye. Perhaps she understood. So, after a time he got calm as the farthest light in the sky, his face shining among them all with a look none could read. He sat upon the ground, and wrote upon pieces of bark with a spear-point—those bits of bark I have seen also at Fort O'Glory, two of them, though there had been more. When he had done he pierced them through with dried strings of the slippery-elm tree, and with the King's consent gave them to the Company's man, who had become one of the People, telling him that if ever he was free, or could send them to the Company, he must do so. The man



"DROPPED THEM AT HIS FEET."

promised, and shame came upon him that he had let the other suffer alone, and he said he was willing to fight and die if the Great Slave gave the word. But he would not, and urged that it was right for the man to save his life. For himself, no. It could never be, and if he must die, he must die.

"You see, a great man must always live alone and die alone, when there are only such people about him. So, now that the letters were written, he sat upon the ground and thought, looking often towards the girl, who also sat apart, with guards near. The King sat thinking also. He could not guess why the Great Slave should give the letters now, since he was not yet to die, nor could the Company's man give a reason when the King asked him. So the King waited, and told the guards to see that the Great Slave should not kill himself.

"As for the Queen, her heart was hard, and she hungered for the death of the girl, and was glad beyond telling that the Slave must light the fagots. She saw with pleasure the young braves bring a long sapling from the forest, and, digging a hole, put it stoutly in the ground, and fetch wood, and heap it about.

"The Great Slave saw this also, and his face set stern. He noted that the bark of the sapling had not been stripped, and more than once he seemed to measure the space between the stake and the shores of the Lake; but he did this most private, so that no one saw but the girl, whose eyes were on him all the time.

"At last the time was come. The Lake was all rose and gold out there in the West, and the water so still, so still. The cool, moist scent of the leaves and grass came out from the woods and up from the plain, and the world was so full of content that a man's heart could cry out, even as now, while we look—eh, is it not good? See the deer drinking there on the other shore!"

He became silent, as if he had forgotten the story altogether. His look was so steady in the distance that he seemed hardly to wink. Tybalt was impatient, but he did not speak. He took a twig, and wrote in the sand, "*Charles Rex.*" Pierre glanced down and saw it. He went on, still looking in the distance.

"There was beating of the little drums, and the crying of the King's speaker; and soon all was ready, and the people gathered at a distance, and the King, and his wife, and the chief men, nearer; and the girl was brought forth.

"As they led her past the Great Slave, she looked into his

eyes, and afterwards her heart was glad, for she knew that at the last he would be near her, and that his hand should light the fires. Two men tied her to the stake, she making no sound, but patient and still. When this was done the King's man cried out again, telling of her crime, and calling for her death. The Great Slave was brought near. No one knew that the palms of his hands had been rubbed in the sand for a purpose. When he was brought beside the stake, a torch was given him by his guards. He looked at the girl. She smiled at him, and said: 'Good-bye. Forgive. I die not afraid, and happy.'



"WROTE UPON PIECES OF BIRCH BARK WITH A SPEAR POINT."

"He did not answer, but stooped and lit the sticks here and there. But suddenly he seized a burning stick, and it and the torch he thrust, like lightning, in the faces of his guards, blinding them. Then he sprang to the stake, and, with a huge pull, wrenched it from the ground, girl and all, and rushed to the shore of the Lake, with her tied so in his arms."

"So swift had he been, that, at first, no one stirred. He reached the shore, rushed into the water, dragging a boat out with one hand as he did so, and putting the girl in, seized

a paddle and was away with a start. A few strokes, and then he stopped, picked up a hatchet that was in the boat with many spears, and freed the girl from the stake. He then paddled on, trusting, with a small hope, that, through his great strength he might keep ahead till darkness came, and then, in the gloom, they could escape. The girl also seized an oar, and the canoe—the King's own canoe—came on like a swallow.

"But the tribe was after them in fifty canoes, some coming straight along, some spreading out to close in later. It was no equal game, for these people were so deft and strong with the oars, and they were a hundred or more to two. There could be but one end. It was what the Great Slave had looked for : to fight till the last breath. And here he could fight for the woman who had risked all for him—just a common woman of the North, but it seemed good to die for her, and she would be happy to die with him.

"So they stood side by side when the spears and arrows rained round them, and they gave death and wounds for wounds in their own bodies. And when, at last, the Indians climbed into the canoe, the Great Slave was dead of many wounds, and the woman, all gashed, lay with her lips to his wet, red cheek. And she smiled as they dragged her away ; and her soul followed hard after his to the Camp of the Great Fires, where she should have no fear to answer all pure women after their kind, as she said."

Pierre stopped, and looked at Tybalt, who, for a moment, had no eyes or tongue ; but there kept up a churning in his throat, which had to do with the milk of human kindness. It was long before he spoke, but at last he said : "If I could but tell it as you have told it to me, Pierre !"

And Pierre answered, "Tell it with your tongue, and this shall be nothing to it, for what am I ? What English have I, a gipsy of the snows ? But do not write it, *mais non !* Writing wanders from the matter—the eyes, and the tongue, and the time, that is the thing. But in a book !—it will sound all cold and thin. It is for the North, for the camp fire, for the big talk before a man rolls into his blanket, and is at peace. No ! no writing, monsieur. Speak it everywhere with your tongue."

"And so I would, were my tongue as yours. Pierre, tell me more about the letters at Fort O'Glory. You know his name—what was it ?"

"You said five hundred dollars for one of those letters. Is it not?"

"Yes." Tybalt had a new hope.

"T'sh! What do I want of five hundred dollars? But, here, answer me a question: Was the lady—his wife, she that was left in England—a good woman? Answer me out of your own sense, and from my story. If you say right you shall have a letter—one that I have by me."

Tybalt's heart leapt into his throat. After a little he said, huskily: "She was a good woman—he believed her that, and so shall I."

"You think he could not have been so great unless, eh? And that Charles Rex, what of him?"

"What good can it do to call him bad now?"

Without a word, Pierre drew from a leather wallet a letter, and, by the light of the fast-setting sun, Tybalt read it, then read it again, and yet again.

"Poor soul! poor lady!" he said. "Was ever such another letter written to any man? And it came too late; this, with the King's recall, came too late!"

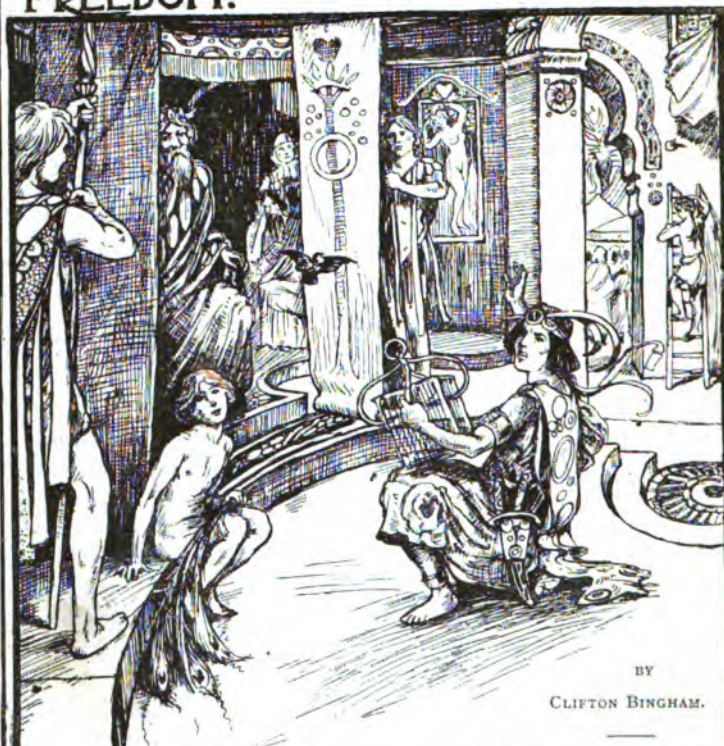
"So—so. He died out there where that wild duck flies—a Great Slave. Years after, the Company's man brought word of all."

Tybalt was looking at the name on the outside of the letter.

"How do they call that name?" asked Pierre. "It is like none I've seen."

But Tybalt shook his head sorrowfully and did not answer.

FREEDOM.



BY

CLIFTON BINGHAM.

A bird sang in the market-hall,
In cage of golden pent;
While all day long, past bench and stall,
The people came and went.
He sang of sunshine, rain, and flow'rs,
Of meadow, wood, and lea,
Of all in this bright world of ours
He nevermore might see.

Illustration

by

ALAN WRIGHT.

There passed across the market-place
The Monarch's favoured slave;
High stood he in the great King's grace,
Had dared his life to save.
"Ask thou a boon," the Monarch said,
" 'Tis thine, by deed and word ;"
The bondsman lowly hent his head—
"Give me yon prisoned bird !"

" 'Tis thine," the King said, gracious
yet ;

The slave no word did say,
But opened the doors of gold and set
The song-bird free for aye !

"Take off," then straightway cried the King,
"Thy fetters and be free !"

The boon thou gavest yon wild thing
I give this hour to thee !"



Some Novelists on Criticism.

BY G. B. BURGIN.

"In literature, as in other matters, it is well to unite as many diverse elements as may be: the individual writer or artist, certainly, is to be estimated by the number of graces he combines, and his power of interpenetrating them in a given work. To discriminate schools of art, of literature, is, of course, part of the obvious business of literary criticism: but, in the work of literary production, it is best not to be overmuch occupied concerning them. For, in truth, the legitimate contention is, not of one age or school of literary art against another, but of all successive schools alike, against the stupidity which is dead to the substance, and the vulgarity which is dead to form."—"Appreciations," by WALTER PATER.

"MY own experience, which extends over more than a quarter of a century, has proved to me that there are kindly critics in plenty. My remarks, therefore," said Mr. Walter Besant, "are not dictated by any personal bitterness.



MR. WALTER BESANT.

One has had rubs: critics have not always been appreciative — no doubt, with good cause: still, the following remarks must be received as absolutely impersonal."

"Of course, Mr. Besant. It is not likely that any question would ever arise on that score. Your disinterestedness is proverbial. I simply want to get your views, because thousands of people will be interested in hearing them."

Mr. Besant considered a moment. "We'll divide my points into numbers as we go along," he said. "Then everything will be plain

sailing. Briefly, they may be classified in this order:—

"1. The critic of every work of Art should be honest and competent. That is to say, if he is honest, he will not be

actuated by any personal motive either of friendship or of private hostility, but solely by a desire to be just. If he is competent, he knows good work when he finds it : he understands the *technique* of the Art of which he treats : he knows the difficulties, the limitations, the methods of the Art. He must also know, besides, the previous work of the writer of whom he treats. This means that the critic should be himself a novelist : or, at least, that he should have seriously attempted the Art of Fiction. Indeed, to expect a review of a novel from one who has never possessed any imaginative or creative power is the same thing as expecting a criticism of a painting from one who is wholly incapable of making the slightest drawing. Unfortunately, this elementary rule is not always observed in criticism, either in the Art of Fiction or the Art of Painting. It may be urged that study of methods and of history will supplement the lack of imaginative power or the power of drawing. I cannot think so.

"2. The ideal reviewer should be 'helpful.' This is a corollary on the last proposition. The man who knows nothing about the Art which he undertakes to criticise, except that he likes a thing, or does not like a thing,—how is that man to write a helpful review, helpful to his readers, helpful to the author ?

"3. The third point is that women ought not to review the novels of men : nor men those of women. The reason of this rule is simply that men and women, whatever may be said, do look upon life from different points of view. I do not believe that any woman has ever understood the man's point of view : how, then, is she to understand his pictures of life and character, his motives and springs of action ?

"4. Some of us think, next, that the critic ought to read the book before him. This seems elementary. But is it ? There are certain papers in which the books are reviewed by batches. The 'reviews' fill up a column or so, with an inch of space to each book. The column is paid for at the rate of, say, thirty shillings, and it may contain twelve books—perhaps twelve novels. Now, will the reader ask himself if it is possible for the reviewer to read a novel and to write an inch of criticism about it for the sum of half-a-crown ? One cannot read and review a novel of the ordinary length in less than a day. Can the reviewer live upon seven half-crowns a week ?"

"It doesn't sound probable."

"Well, that is what it would come to if the reviewer had to

read the books. In one of these novel batches, some time ago, I came upon a novel by George Meredith, sandwiched between two novels by school-girls, as if it were of no greater importance. In another, I came upon a notice of a novel of my own, in which—there were twelve lines altogether—there were actually twelve mis-statements—not opinions, mind, but mis-statements—as to the plot and plan of the story. It was impossible to be angry. One reflected that the poor man had to earn his half-crown: how could he read the book? And in another batch, I came upon a genealogical work noticed—with some severity—as a novel. The reviewer, you see, was misled by the title and the binding, both of which suggested a story.

“5. It is, perhaps, late in the day to protest against the old-fashioned ‘blackguard bludgeon,’ the style of reviewing which consists of savage onslaughts, generally upon some harmless little book written by a young lady, the production of which was paid for by the author, a book bound to fall dead as soon as produced. This method is much rarer than formerly, but it is not yet quite extinct. It will not altogether cease, because the temptation to ‘slate’ with the critic who has no imaginative or creative power is too strong to be resisted. It is so very, very easy. But one hopes that editors themselves will discover that the practice does harm to a paper, because the reading public certainly no longer likes the ‘blackguard bludgeon.’

“6. We have recently, at the Society of Authors, started and worked a branch which has opened my eyes as to the possibility of really ‘helpful’ criticism. We offer to read for young authors their MSS., and to give them such an opinion as a judicious ‘coach’ gives a pupil in a piece of composition. We have employed upon this work half-a-dozen novelists, men and women. The reports which they send in are eminently ‘helpful’ criticisms. The author is not ‘slated’ nor jumped upon: there are none of the stale, stock old adjectives which we know so well: he is quite plainly told, as a tutor would tell him, what are the defects of his work, and how he should alter and improve his work, and whether there is any hope or promise in his work of future success. In many cases the writers have received and have acknowledged most helpful and practical advice on points in which none but actual novelists can advise. In some cases the writer has been induced to withdraw from a hopeless struggle.

“I have come to the opinion, after reading a great many

judgments on a great many books, that the best critic of novels—the kindest, the most helpful, the most appreciative, the most effective—is always one who is himself a novelist—and not a failure. And I venture to suggest that to entrust this branch of work to well-known novelists, if they can be persuaded to do

the work, would be the most practical method of getting the work done well.



DR. CONAN DOYLE.

“I remember,” said Dr. Conan Doyle, as we sat cosily conversing in his study at Norwood, “about two years ago seeing a review of ‘The Wreckers,’ then just out, in a paper which is supposed to be peculiarly identified with British literature. The review was jumbled up with several others in one column, was about ten or twelve lines long, and dismissed the book with a few words of contempt.

‘There is not a scene which will remain in the mind of the reader,’ said the critic. As a matter of fact, I had just read the book myself and was haunted by the extraordinary narrative power shown in the auction scene and also in the scene of the slaying of the crew. It struck me as so grotesque, that one who stands second to none in modern literature should be dismissed with such cutting contempt and so briefly in a paper which had pretensions to especially represent literary interests, that I took some pains to hunt up other reviews of books which are now admitted to be great, in different critical journals. I must confess, however, that where I came to ban I remained to bless. On the whole, with occasional lapses, the reviews were fair and adequate. I was left with the conviction that it is very seldom that good work is overlooked by the critics.”

“But sometimes a man feels that the critics don’t recognise his merits?”

"There are times when every man feels himself to be ill-used. But then he must candidly allow that there are times also when he gets injudicious praise, which is a much more dangerous thing than undeserved blame. The one may be set against the other. The system of anonymous criticism always seems to me to be a very bad one. It removes that sense of responsibility under which a writer would hesitate before he treated his subject in a flippant or uncharitable manner. Another improvement would be that books which are addressed to women should be reviewed by women, and *vice versâ*. When a lady has to review a book which has hardly a female character in it and which deals with life in the camp or the forecastle, how can she possibly approach it with sympathy or knowledge? If I had to choose my own critic I would always take the opinion of a brother novelist, for I believe that the creative and the critical faculties usually go together. Failing this, however, I believe that one can in our press rely upon getting an opinion which is thoroughly honest, impartial, and frequently intelligent."

"I should say," reflected Mr. Grant Allen, "first of all, that to talk as though there were two distinct classes—novelists and critics—is to make a distinction without a difference; for the most part, the novelists and the critics are the same people. There is a great gulf between a composer or a singer and the musical critic, between a painter and the art critic; but there is no such difference between a novelist and the critic of novels. Both are men of letters, and, as often as not, the man who reviews novels writes novels, too. That is the best criticism. If you could get art-criticism done by the greatest artists, you would have the equivalent of what exists in literature."

"And as to fairness, the tone and temper of the present criticism?"

"As far as fairness goes, I think most reviewing is done fairly, and I speak there as doer and sufferer. I have written some twenty novels which have been reviewed by other men, and I must have reviewed a hundred novels written by other men; and, on the average, I think I have got about as fair treatment as I have given."

"But about the mere conditions of space allotted to reviews, the kind of *olla podrida* in which everything is lumped up together. Don't you think that some plan might be arrived at in order to improve upon the present system?"

"The error is that publishers expect every book will be reviewed, and that critical journals give way to that expectation on the part of the publisher. What ought to happen is that one should only review a book if one is deeply interested in it, for good or for evil. Just the other day a friend of mine got a scientific book for review on 'Marsupials and Monotremes,' and he came to me and said, 'What is a Monotreme, any way?' Reviewing of that sort seems to me quite useless. On the other hand, one gets now and then a book which interests one very much, either because one thinks it so good, or because it rouses thought and, possibly, opposition. It were to be desired that reviewing should be more spontaneous, but to say that is to say that Utopia is a delightful country, and that literature will be excellently managed in the Millennium. The actual conditions are inevitable; it is no more use kicking against them than kicking against the English climate. My own practice of late has been, if a book strikes me immensely, to send a signed review of it to some important critical organ, such as *The Fortnightly* or *The Academy*."

"And as to anonymous reviewing?"

"Anonymous reviewing I dislike, although, of course, I had to do it for daily bread, like the rest of us. The more entirely literary a journal is, the less value will its reviews possess on this account, because in the literary journal every book is reviewed, while in other journals a book is more likely to be noticed because some contributor has been powerfully moved by it.

"On the whole, substantial justice is done by reviews. You can't boom a thoroughly bad book.

The most you can do is to point out the merits of a good book and let it win its way by dint of those merits. It is easier to damn a good book than to boom a bad one. Good books have sometimes got crushed, and, oftener still, have passed unnoticed."



MR. GRANT ALLEN.

“How about the juvenile reviewer?”

“I don't see much harm in the juvenile reviewer. We were all juvenile reviewers ourselves in our time. A man must learn his trade on something, and, as the French proverb says, ‘Barbers learn to shave on the chins of fools.’ We poor novelists form the *corpus vile* for the juvenile reviewers’ experiments. ‘It doesn't hurt us and it pleases them,’ as the collier said when his wife belaboured him. Of course, the juvenile reviewer is astonishingly omniscient, but that is a pleasing trait of youth, and youth is a property I respect so much that I won't run it down on no better ground than I have unfortunately outlived it. Let the young reviewer go on and prosper. Let him brandish his broadsword in the halfpenny papers: he will learn in time to write good English with it. If he objects that good English is usually written with a different implement, I can only say he is hypercritical, and that most of us nowadays use a typewriter.”

Miss Marie Corelli idealised the subject by the poetic manner in which she mingled tea and criticism together. “In answer to your request I can only say this, that if I could conscientiously realise the existence of any ‘reviewers,’ strictly speaking, I should be very glad to express an honest and respectful opinion concerning them. But there are none. ‘Reviewing’ work is too badly paid for any reasonable being to think of making it either an art or a business. Hence we have only a few ‘would-be’ critics, whose so-called ‘criticism’ of a book consists of a few flippant remarks, such as might be used by a society woman discussing the latest literature at a fashionable tea. A real ‘review’ should, I imagine, be a painstaking, scholarly, dignified, and temperate analysis of the work submitted to consideration, with a well-weighed, evenly-balanced, ‘summing up’ for or against the author, who would then be able to discern justly, and with advantage, the causes why he, or she, had been praised or blamed. As matters at present stand, authors can learn nothing from their reviews, except the deplorable extent of their ‘reviewer’s’ ignorance of things in general and literature in particular. A mere ‘smart’ sentence or two, a line of ‘chaff,’ with a dash of vulgar, if veiled, personal abuse, does not constitute a ‘review,’ yet this is all most books get, just now, in the leading dailies and weeklies. It is not altogether creditable to journalism to find race-meetings, dress at the Drawing-rooms, or ‘first-nights’ at the play admirably and carefully described, while a book, which, for all anybody

knows, may be destined to influence the minds of thousands, gets jeered at, or 'scratched off' in a few contemptuous, and, I am sorry to say, often ungrammatical lines. I do not speak at all from personal feeling, because, as far as personal feeling goes, I have entirely ceased to care about criticism, finding that it has no effect whatever on the public mind. I am told that it is now everywhere acknowledged that never did a book get more unjustly maligned, and wilfully misrepresented, than my 'Barabbas.' That may be so, but what of it? Spiteful criticisms never did a book real harm yet, provided the book itself had backbone. And though the letters sent to me from utter strangers, indignantly protesting against my 'unjust critics,' would now fill a fair-sized travelling trunk, I cannot say I have myself shared in my enthusiastic correspondents' anger, being much more amused than wrathful. It would have been, indeed, ridiculous to be annoyed by 'criticisms' on a work dealing with the New Testament from 'critics' who showed themselves ignorant of the New Testament itself. So I simply looked on and enjoyed the fun. I knew the public would retaliate and avenge me in its own good time, as it has done. Its continuous 'rush' for the book my 'friends on the press' so valiantly sought to kill, is invigorating beyond all expression. So that personal experience teaches me the 'little worth' of newspaper praise."

"Do you think that favourable notices will really float a book?"

"A lady novelist wrote to me the other day complaining bitterly of the failure of her book, '*considering the splendid criticisms I had!*' she wailed. As a matter of sad truth her book was totally devoid of any new or lasting interest, and if the whole press had joined in shouting eulogies it would have fallen flat with our present-day analytical and fastidious public. I think authors do not sufficiently bear in mind the important fact that in this age of ours, the public *thinks for itself* much more extensively than we give it credit for. It is a cultured public, and its great brain is fully capable of deciding things. It rather objects to be treated like a child, and told 'what to read and what to avoid,' and, moreover, we must not fail to note that it mistrusts criticism generally, and seldom reads 'reviews.' And why? Simply because it recognizes the existence of 'log-rolling.' It is perfectly aware, for instance, that Mr. Theodore Watts is log-roller-in-chief to Mr. Swinburne, that Mr. Le Gallienne 'rolls' greatly for Mr. Norman Gale, and that Mr.

Andrew Lang tumbles his logs along over everything for as many as his humour fits. If an author is very highly and extravagantly praised in the press, therefore, the public metaphorically winks one eye, and says, 'He's got a friend at court!' or what is worse, 'Looks as if he wrote that himself!' If, on the contrary, he gets malignantly, savagely, or sneeringly abused, the public 'winks the other eye,' and says, 'That's a nasty one! Something original, no doubt, and this chap's jealous.' And they straightway 'go' for the book reviled. If, to avoid both Scylla and Charybdis, the critics say nothing, and studiously avoid the very mention of an author's name, drop him out of the list of literary magnates, and try hard to 'pass him over' in the press, the while his book and himself are being spoken of everywhere in society, then the public open both eyes wide, and exclaim loudly, 'This must be a great fellow! The papers are actually afraid to mention him, lest he should cut out all the little fry. He must be a *real* genius!' For the old saying of Socrates serves for the present as for the past: 'There is no greater proof of success than when your contemporaries are silent concerning your victories *for fear* you should seem distinguished.'"

"But can you suggest any remedy for the present system, Miss Corelli?"

"I can readily imagine an Utopian state of 'reviewing' where—in honour and equity should reign supreme, and where authors (who, if they are worth anything at all, should always be grateful to learn) might obtain great help from the temperate, well-worded judgment of an unprejudiced and brilliantly-educated critic. But from the uneducated and flippant nothing can be expected but ignorance and flippancy, and from the practice of 'log-rolling' nothing can come but injustice and temporary neglect (though only temporary) to those who have *no* 'log-rollers.' The game of 'catspaw,' which was played so prettily some months ago by some of the very little poets, was one of the funniest lessons in 'criticism' going, and amused all sober students of literature vastly. These gentlemen set each other up and knocked each other down again in the columns of their own particular periodicals like so many nine-pins. And the public noted it all—the public is not deaf, or blind, or foolish. It stands outside the press and looks on, generally grinning from ear to ear. It watches the game of 'catspaw,' it blandly observes the logs rolling, but it makes no comment; in itself it is chiefly

interested in the news-telegrams. And, regardless of catspaw and log-rolling, it chooses its own books without advice, or contrary to advice, deeming itself competent to select its own entertainment, whether in poetry or prose."

"You think it will not be dictated to?"

"Yes. It is now beginning to 'gird' at Mudie. It cannot always get the books it wants from the Circulating Library at its own time, and is frequently palmed off with other books which it does not in the least care about; hence it is laying down silently, but in a sufficiently vast and impressive manner, a friendly suggestion to all authors, to wit—that said authors should dispense with the Circulating Middle-Man. That they should come straight to their readers with their books in one volume at a reasonable price, after the sensible fashion practised in France, where popular novelists are allowed, actually allowed, to make big fortunes by their brain-work, and where no Circulating Library has any power to set a limit to their editions or their progress. The notion also that infectious illnesses are carried about in the pages of circulating library books is seriously founded, and is beginning to carry weight with many people; and if, added to this, the leading popular authors strenuously combine against the 'lending' system, and compel it to confine itself to the wants of penurious old maiden ladies and invalid dowagers, then 'criticism' will have less weight than ever, as books will be more rapidly obtained and submitted to the direct judgment of the public itself. This is 'a consummation devoutly to be wished.' No author who has anything noble, true, or new to say need fear neglect from the millions of readers for whom he works. Not all the abuse in the world can keep him down—though, if his work be intrinsically worthless and uninteresting, no 'booming' can keep him up. The public is the supreme critic, and, though it does not write in the *Quarterly* or the *Nineteenth Century*, it thinks and talks independently of everything and everybody, and on its thought and word alone depends the fate of any piece of literature. Thus much I have learned in my own brief career, so that when you ask me, as one author among many, what my opinion is concerning critics and criticism, my reply (for the reasons above stated) resolves itself into an absolute *nil*, as a book must always stand by itself to rise or fall, and criticisms, bad or good, can only affect it temporarily, if at all, and are therefore valueless."

Mr. Hall Caine had just finished breakfast. We adjourned to a little conservatory and threshed the matter out whilst several other less fortunate beings waited to interview him on burning topics of the day.

"Do you consider, Mr. Caine, that criticism is really a powerful force?"

"Yes; I am bound to think that it is so—and in the most material way. I remember George Bentley telling me that a few years ago a favourable article in *The Times* would carry off an edition in twenty-four hours. Also I remember Hodder & Stoughton saying that when they published Professor Drummond's 'Natural Law of the Spiritual World' (I think at his own expense, and without having the least certainty of its success), a review appeared in *The Spectator*, and that this was followed immediately by a tremendous run on the book. Then I remember a very clever and amusing skit on one of my novels in *Punch*. It appeared on Wednesday, and we had then nearly 2,000 copies of the current edition on the shelves at the publishers. On Saturday there was not a copy left, nothing else having occurred in the mean time to cause an unusual demand. The power of *The Athenæum* is no less remarkable than that of *The Times*, *Spectator*, and *Punch*; not so much, perhaps, in the direction of great sales as of literary reputation. It is used very much by writers of memoirs, compilers of dictionaries, &c. In one of my books I made a more than usually glaring error, which was pointed out in *The Athenæum*. I immediately rectified the error, but every dictionary, annual, and so forth, to this day mentions my blunder in the words used by *The Athenæum*.

"Oh yes, I am compelled to believe that, for good or for bad, criticism is a tremendous force. On the other hand, great literary successes have been made without the aid of criticism. I have never heard that the Waverley Novels owed much of



MR. HALL CAINE.
(From a photograph by H. S. Mendelssohn.)

their success to criticism. And, again, great successes have been made in the teeth of criticism. Witness 'Christabel,' the 'Lyrical Ballads,' and Keats in relation to *Blackwood* and *The Quarterly*. Then, when criticism has thrown the whole weight of its influence into the scale of book or author, it has often produced no effect whatever. Instance the many forgotten books that were being lauded to the skies in the very numbers of the early *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly*, in which Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats were derided. The only inference I can draw is a very simple one, viz., that criticism in its effects is very much like advertising. When a thing that is advertised greatly is good, it goes, and goes permanently; when it is bad, it only goes for a while; the public finds it out."

"And now for the present condition of criticism, Mr. Caine. What do you think of it?"

"Well, I recognise that the conditions are constantly changing. First of all, there is now a profession of critics, which did not exist twenty or thirty years ago. This seems to me to be both good and bad in its effects on literature; good in helping to produce a few men who are thoroughly equipped; bad in the accidental effect of turning out literary journeymen who do their day's work for their day's pay, and have no great burden of conscience or of literary responsibility. I heard a well-known and highly-gifted critic say the other day that there were not more than six critics now writing. I shouldn't dare to draw a line so straight. The author (I mean by that the author of imaginative work—I have no right to speak for any other) knows that there are a group of men who can be trusted to pronounce on the merits of a piece of work, to know what the author is aiming at, how far he has achieved his aim, and how far fallen short of it. Of course, this group does not include the whole family of critics. There are two distinct branches of that family besides:—

"(1) The men who follow, like sheep, the opinions that are made for them by the best dozen critics. These are the poor execrated persons who write the colourless little reviews (twenty to the column) which contain no clear idea of any kind. With regard to these people and their reviews, I agree with what Mr. Besant has said. They are ill paid; their work has to be scamped; it is necessarily inefficient; it has no right to exist.

"(2) The second branch of the family are the people who write solely for the sake of sensation. These are the critics.

who produce the 'slating' reviews, and they are generally employed on papers that are compelled to make themselves felt. The easiest way to make an impression is to oppose your opinions to everybody else's. Only the journals that live from hand to mouth want the kind of critic who does that. He amuses the public, but I doubt if he has any real effect in forming public opinion. It is of no use to quarrel with him. He lives on rumpus. Leave him alone. As Keats said, there is a kind of literary insult to which there is only one reply—a blow."

"Then there is another rather delicate point, Mr. Caine. Do you believe in the honesty of the critical press?"

"Indeed I do. I am forced to conclude that there are evidences of corruption and collusion, and so forth; that fictitious reputations are constantly being rigged up; that there have been a few cases of absolute conspiracy to injure; but I cannot imagine that the newspapers themselves are anything but honest in their aims. Take the editors of a few of them: Mr. MacColl, Mr. Sydney Low, Mr. Cotton, Mr. Jerome, Mr. Fletcher, Mr. Cust, Mr. Cook—these editors may occasionally be the victims of contributors with dishonest motives, but I know the men, and I will not believe for a moment that they would do the doubtful things that their journalistic predecessors of fifty to eighty years ago were charged with. Not long ago one of their number made a frank and manly public confession of how his paper had suffered at the hands of a hasty or angry reviewer. Their weakness—their natural and human weakness—will usually be on the side of good nature; they will want to help the lame dog over the stile. I do not believe at all that they are capable of laming the poor wretch to begin with.

"Mr. Pinero, a little while ago, made an admirable and wholesome speech on the value of praise. Praise gets the best out of an imaginative writer; censure, especially unmerited censure (like envy and some other literary bad passions), has a dwarfing and petrifying effect on the imagination. But, while seeing this, I am bound to recognise the occasional evil results of excess of enthusiasm. Some of the more generous of our writers are, perhaps, a little prone to this; Mr. Grant Allen, for example (to whom, however, I owe a personal debt of gratitude for what he did with such splendid liberality and timeliness in the case of Watson); and Mr. Stead, in another way."

"But after all, Mr. Caine, who is the ultimate critic?"

"The public, surely. It often happens that the public takes books on trust from the professed guides of literature, but if the books are not *right*, it drops them. I am feeling, increasingly day by day, that *rightness* in imaginative writing is more important than subject or style, or anything else. If a story is right in its theme, and the evolution of its theme, it will live; if it is not right, it will die, whatever its secondary literary qualities. This explains to me the disappearance of many a book of great merit. It also explains the continued life of many a book full of defects. I feel that criticism nowadays is paying too little attention to this. On the other hand, it seems to me occupied too much with the appreciation of niceties of style. Treatment is a great thing—a very great thing—but it is not everything, and some of the worst errors of modern criticism are being made by disregard of this fundamental point.

"One word more. Much of the criticism of the hour leaves on my mind the greatest uncertainty as to whom it is meant for. Is it meant for the publisher? Or for the author? Or for the public? The publisher's idea is that a criticism ought to tell what the book being reviewed is about, so that people may be tempted to buy it; the author's view is that it should tell what the merits of the book are, so that his reputation may increase; the public thinks that it ought to be told what is in the book that is fresh and new. My own conclusion would be that the public is nearest right; criticism should be written mainly from the point of view of the people who want news. That is a rather dwarfing limitation for the great body of the critical fraternity—I can't expect powerful critics like my friend Theodore Watts to submit to it—but there is common sense in it, nevertheless."



The Matrimonial Agency.

BY LINCOLN SPRINGFIELD.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEO. HUTCHINSON.

"BUT you don't pretend, Alec," I said, as I was discussing with Yorke at the Press Club some of his journalistic experiences with a view to the selection of the more entertaining of them, "that you have never been out on expeditions which have failed, that you have never caught that which is termed a 'mike' in the Fleet Street tongue."

"Of course, I don't make any assertion so absurd," replied Yorke, "but the failures are not interesting, and do not, therefore, require to be recalled. Wait a moment, though. There was one incident which amused me at the time, and which yielded no 'copy' that ever got into the paper. Will you listen?"

"By all means."

"I daresay you remember the trial which went at the time by the name of 'The Matrimonial Agency Scandal.' By very equivocal means one Porter, who ran a Matrimonial Agency in the Strand, brought together a wealthy Cuban girl and a pseudo-Count from the Mile End Road. This ill-assorted couple were married at a Registry Office, under circumstances which I need not now exhume. They were circumstances, at all events, which warranted the Divorce Court in giving the lady the verdict in the nullity suit which she brought. During the hearing of the action the intrigues by which the ingenious Porter assisted the adventurer to capture, temporarily, the lady and her *dot* stood revealed in that fierce light which beats upon the matrimonial courts during the hearing of one more sensational case. Encouraged by her success, the Cuban damsel next sued Porter for the £5,000 which he had separated from the settlement as his share of the plunder, and there were more revelations of the peculiar machinery of this business of Porter's which usurped the functions of that department of Heaven where marriages are made. Growing, of course, upon what it fed, the public appetite hungered for more matrimonial agency disclosures.

"'We must have a big boom on this,' said the *Herald* editor to me, for I daresay you have noticed the personal communications



"EXCUSE ME."

of editors do not always sustain the ornate and polished style of their leading articles. 'If you can work anything up, you can have the whole of the bill (contents-bill) to yourself.'

" 'Yes, there are plenty of matters which did not come out in court, as well as those which did,' I replied.

" 'I'll tell you what would make some splendidly picturesque "copy"—to capture a batch of the correspondence between the agency and some of its clients.'

" 'Yes, it would. I suppose you can suggest a way for carrying out the scheme now you have broached it.'

" 'Well, why not nobble the postman, and intercept the letters that way?' The editor said this quite seriously, I assure you. I suppose he had drained his morality dry by his indignant denunciation, in the 'leader' he had just finished, of the dishonesty of political patronage in public appointments. There never were men who so strained at gnats and took camels at one bite as the general run of editors. I pointed out to him that a scheme of that sort would probably land both the postman and myself in gaol, whereupon he was good enough to promptly leave ways and means to my own resource.

" My first impulse was to consult the matrimonial office as a client myself, but I had a presentiment that Mrs. Yorke would veto any experimental courtship of that description on my part. You cannot get your domestic partner to share your professional enthusiasm to the extent of tolerating even the merely histrionic and pretended philandering which that scheme would involve. Moreover, any testimony I obtained in that manner would be the evidence of an *agent provocateur*, and tainted accordingly.

" The policy of bribing a clerk in the agency next occurred to me for consideration. It was a direct and easy method, for clerks in questionable concerns of this sort do not put a very high price upon their incorruptibility. I had practically decided upon that scheme, and was making my way towards the Strand to reconnoitre, when I met a youth who unconsciously modified my plan of campaign. He was Squills, the dandified young man who honoured Messrs. Southdown and Kingwood, the solicitors, by acting in the capacity of their confidential clerk.

" 'Excuse me,' I said, barring his way, 'but you are Southdown and Kingwood, I believe?'

" The young man screwed a monocle into his right eye, after the manner of the senior of his firm, and admitted affably that he was.

" 'I'm Yorke, of the *Herald*,' I explained.

“ ‘Yes, I saw you in court during the hearing of the Porter case,’ he said, evidently propitiated by the manner in which I had addressed him.

“ ‘You conducted that case remarkably well, if I may say so,’ I proceeded, ‘and I never saw Pilcher in better form.’

“ ‘Pilcher couldn’t help doing it well, on the brief I got up for him. All the witnesses came up to their proofs, and the case was so strong that even his brother could have won it!’

“ ‘Oh! has Pilcher a brother who is learned in the law?’

“ ‘No, his brother is only a judge. He used to make an awful exhibition of himself when he was at the bar, and was warranted to lose any case. He’s even worse now, but it doesn’t show in a judge.’

“ ‘Have you got your verdict and costs out of Porter yet?’

“ ‘No, but I had the sheriff’s officers put in this morning, one at his private house at Norwood, and one at his offices.’

“ ‘What a wonderful stroke of luck for me, I thought. Of all the various embodiments of the law, the man in possession has the most human nature in him, if in the tapping of it you go the right way to work. Here was Providence deliberately making an opening for me! I drove out to the Strand, and hurried up the stairs leading to the Matrimonial Agency, a somewhat dingy approach to the Temple of Hymen. I thought the bailiff could not yet have arrived on the scene, for the notes of a piano caught my ear. I opened the door, and the piano was suddenly mute. The bailiff was sitting at the far end of the room, some yards away from the piano, playing the sybarite, on an elegant settee, with his clumsy feet on the brocaded satin seat of a pretty gilt-framed chair.

“ ‘Good morning,’ I said, ‘I have just called from Messrs. Southdown and Kingwood to see if you are getting on all right.’

“ ‘Oh, yes, sir, thank you,’ he answered.

“ ‘But you must be dry, eh? Haven’t you come across the old man’s refreshment department yet?’

“ ‘No, sir, but not for want of looking, I don’t mind saying.’

“ ‘Well, we must cater for ourselves then’—and I pulled the handle of the messenger call, and before long had a bottle of whisky, some clay pipes, and some tobacco on the scene, to all of which the man in possession took very kindly.

“ ‘Was I mistaken, or have I met a musical bailiff?’ I enquired.

“ ‘He shifted a little uneasily on his seat, and replied with a

jerk of his thumb, 'No, it was her. Here,' he shouted, 'Miss —, I forget your name, but you behind the screen.'

"I was somewhat startled to see emerge from behind the screen, not a little French milliner, but a person whose yachting hat, navy blue costume, and large sailor collar, trimmed with white braid, suggested a girl fresh from boarding school, but whose thickly-powdered face and perceptible wrinkles told of her age another story, which could not be rebutted by her ostentatious display of a copy of the *Girl's*



"PLAYED 'THE MAIDEN'S PRAYER

Grattan-Johnson

Own Paper, which was obviously as much a part of her toilet as were her gloves or her hat.

"'You may continue your performance, if you please,' said the bailiff, and the lady, looking scandalised at the clay pipes and the clouds of smoke which were beginning to obscure the ceiling, resumed her seat at the piano, and played 'The Maiden's

Prayer,' while the bailiff whispered in my ear an explanation of this curious vision.

" 'She's one of the clients,' he said, with a wink and a nudge. 'I've had several of 'em here, and, being lonely, I've had a bit of a game with 'em, kiddin' 'em I'm the new boss of the show. There was one very pretty 'un, and I'm not sure that I ain't definitely engaged myself to her. Still, if the worst was to come to the worst, I suppose the employer's liability would come in all right, and the sheriff would have to pay my damages, eh? This one here came in, and asked if she should play her piece over, for old Porter seems to have been in the habit of testing their accomplishments before vouching for 'em. Well, I saw no just cause or impediment why she shouldn't play her piece, and, having nothing better to do, I sat down to listen. We heard you coming, and I beckoned her to slip behind the screen, not knowing who you might be. But I don't think we'll detain her now, eh?'

" 'I wouldn't have stopped and made myself *de trop* had I known you had company,' I said.

" 'Well, she ain't a beauty, and *she* didn't bring in any whisky,' was his reply, 'so I don't bear you any grudge, sir, I can assure you. I won't keep you any longer to-day,' he proceeded, turning to the lady and raising his voice, 'because, to tell you the truth, there's a little hitch in this 'ere business. It's suspended working for the present, and I'm told the sheriff's officer may be here at any minute to arrest anybody found on the premises.'

" She gave a little scream, seized her paper and her parasol, and darted out of the door and down the stairs as rapidly as if there were a mouse at the top and an eligible suitor at the bottom.

" The bailiff laughed till he choked. He was a stout, jovial, rubicund old boy, and from his remark that 'This 'ere is better than being on the road for fourteen hours at a stretch,' I presumed him to have been a 'bus driver before he joined the commission of the sheriff. He was an incongruous figure in that daintily-upholstered room. He sat smoking as unconcernedly as one born to the luxury in the midst of which he found himself, and spat out a new design upon the soft Turkey carpet. When I had first entered the room it was pervaded with a faint scent of stale patchouli; but that was before the bailiff had got to work with his pipe. The gas globes were all painted with chubby little cupids, and from their plush frames on the embossed wall-paper there looked down a number of charming female figures, all

in a more or less elementary condition of apparel. The heavy tapestry curtains on the doors gave the finishing touch of cosiness to the apartment; and the three other rooms leading off it were reproductions of this on a smaller scale, with violins, flutes, and banjos in profusion upon the chairs and table.

"The bailiff continued to tell me, with picturesque details, of his diversions at the expense of the clients who had called; and accompanied his narrative so steadily with whisky that another supply had to be ordered. Then we started turning

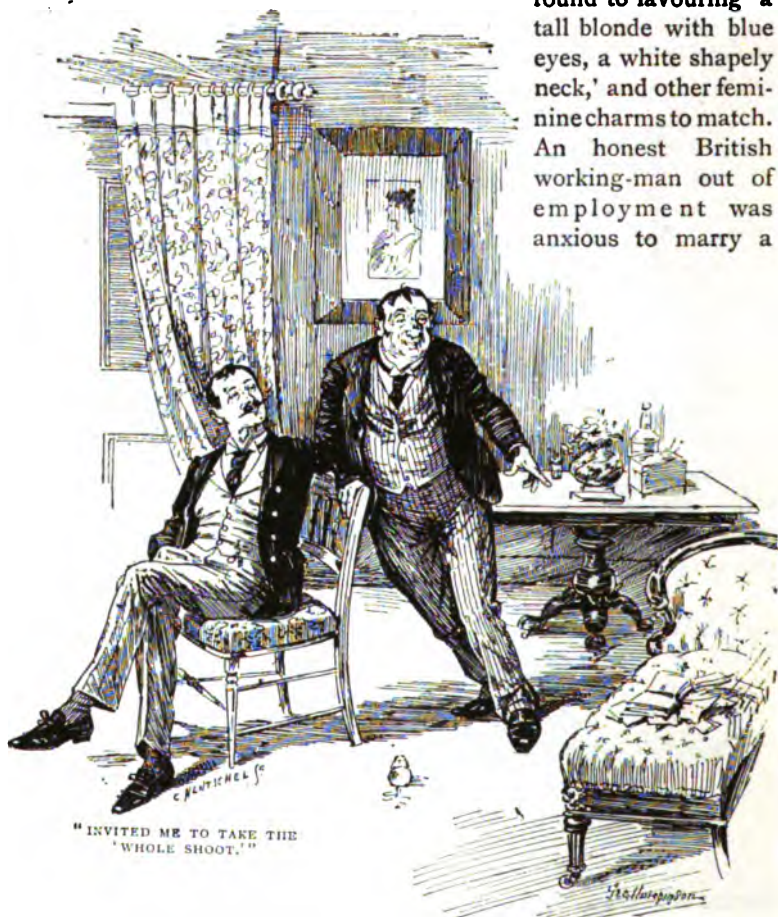


"READ THEM OUT TO EACH OTHER."

out the drawers and pigeon-holes, and examining the correspondence. Some of these documents were very human, and the bailiff and I read them out to each other in high glee, my friend failing to observe that I was making on the sofa a small heap of selected billets. Some of these letters were surprising by reason of the social status of those who wrote them. Even the peerage was prominently represented. The Earl of Poyning wrote desiring introduction to 'a stylish brunette with black flashing eyes and

good figure.' Mrs. Wentworth, a widow of 22, as she admitted herself to be, had set her heart upon a clergyman; and a Sussex rector had, a few days later, expressed a desire to open up negotiations with Mrs. Wentworth. Three days after his former letter, Lord Poyning had changed his noble mind, and had veered

round to favouring 'a tall blonde with blue eyes, a white shapely neck,' and other feminine charms to match. An honest British working-man out of employment was anxious to marry a



'hairess,' who might be as plain as a brick wall, and yet find in him 'a luvin' spows,' while he was also prepared to 'treat the agency hansum if you bring it orf.' Then Lord Poyning wrote again describing yet another pattern of a contingent Countess; and the working-man, after waiting unprofitably for his 'hairess,'

modified his demand, and expressed himself ready to marry any one with an income not less than £50, or £100 cash in hand.

"I shall not be so contemptuous of the law as to say that its portly representative at this impromptu investigation was intoxicated. But the bailiff had incontrovertibly imbibed sufficient whisky to occasion him to take a thoroughly optimistic view of life. When I suggested, therefore, that I should be doing no harm were I to pocket a few of the letters as curiosities, he cordially invited me to take the 'whole shoot' if I thought fit. I contented myself with the heap I had accumulated on the sofa.

"I rushed back to the office, and, with some assistance in the copying, soon got out three columns of the letters of the Earl of Poyning, Mrs. Wentworth, the Sussex rector, and the rest of them. We preserved the exact, and I may say original, orthography of all the letters, with the conscientiousness of that trombone player of old who spoilt the performance of a symphony by a loud blast in the middle of a passage for strings only, excusing himself subsequently by saying, 'I see he was only a squashed fly, but he was dere, and so I blayed him!'"

"But you said this was an expedition which yielded no 'copy,'" I reminded Yorke.

"No 'copy' which ever got into the paper," I said. "The editor announced to me, after the copy had been set up, that the proprietor sternly forbade its appearance. I had not known until that moment who the proprietor of the paper was."

"And who was he?"

"The Earl of Poyning!"



A Ramble Through Normandy.

BY RALPH W. ROBINSON.



A STREET IN CAUDEBEC.

NORMANDY presents many attractions to the unconventional tourist in search of a quaint and old world simplicity and quietude rather than the bustle and unrest of most modern holiday haunts. The life of the people, the stern pathos of their everyday struggles to exist, and the air of ripe repose about their dwellings, all combine to woo the wanderer in search of the picturesque. And living in Normandy costs ridiculously little as compared with the extortionate demands of English, Scotch, and



A NORMANDY WIDOW.

Irish landlords. For a few francs a day, it is possible to dwell there in comparative luxury. Most Normandy peasants have a superstitious dread of being photographed, but those who did sit for me considered themselves amply repaid when I gave them a few specimens of my work. The following photographs will serve to show Caudebec and its environs little changed by modern innovations or alterations:



FLOUGHING NEAR CAUDEBEC.



MARKET DAY AT CAUDEBEC.

**DEJEUNER.****GOING TO ST. NICOLAS.**



THE SEINE AT CAUDEBEC.



IN THE FIELDS.



AT ST. NICOLAS.



JUVENILES.



MAKING A BARGAIN.



A FAMILY PARTY.

**MAKING BUTTER.****COLLECTING FIREWOOD.**



GOSSIPS.



A NORMANDY FARM.



AN AL FRESCO TOILET.



AT THE WASH-TUB.

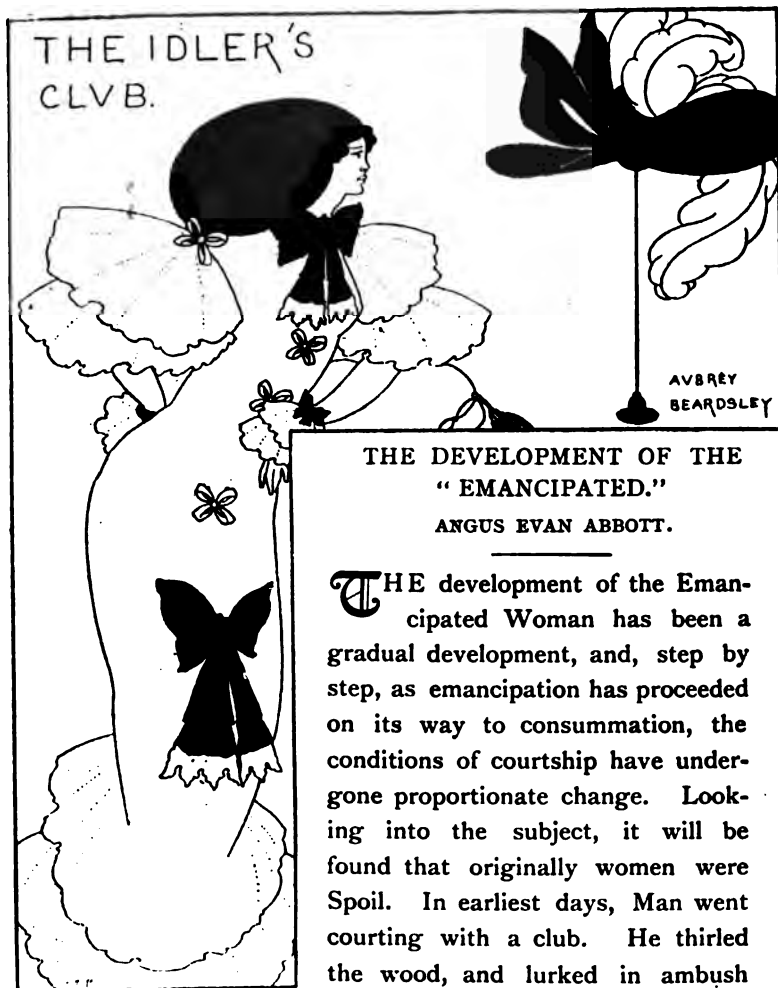


"HOW MUCH?"



A DIFFICULT TEAM.

How to Court the "Advanced Woman."



THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE "EMANCIPATED."

ANGUS EVAN ABBOTT.

THE development of the Emancipated Woman has been a gradual development, and, step by step, as emancipation has proceeded on its way to consummation, the conditions of courtship have undergone proportionate change. Looking into the subject, it will be found that originally women were Spoil. In earliest days, Man went courting with a club. He thirled the wood, and lurked in ambush

until the opportune moment arrived, when, with all the ardour of a young lover, he knocked the fair lady's father on the head and made off with the object of his choice. This decisive manner of courtship early inclined the lady to a respect for her lord and master, and to a definite idea of his superiority, physical and mental; and in this we find, as we invariably do find, that primitive ways were the best. As Woman multiplied on the face of the earth, increasing her proportionate number in proportion to the number of men slain in the process of courtship and other wars, she gradually passed from Spoil to Chattel. More numerous, she became cheaper. Man hesitated, and then refused, to risk his life in procuring her or in defending his title to her, and heroic courtship degenerated into mercantile. A Chattel, she was offered by her guardian to the highest bidder who, as we know, paid for her in kind—lambs, geese, deer, camels, white elephants, &c. Pressing forward in civilisation century by century, Man became better able to judge, to think, to reason. As his mind gradually unfolded and expanded, he, beginning to see matters in their true light, lopped off a sheep here and a camel there, reducing the amount paid decade by decade, shortening and shortening the price until one day—it is a century ago, or more—Man, in his wisdom, refused to part with his goods for the possession of a wife, maintaining that the bargain was one-sided, and that consideration for possession was given in a welcome to his halls and her keep for life. Women then passed from the “Chattel” to the “Souvenir” state. She was given away without exchange. This happy condition of things lasted but a short time. The march of progress was not to be stayed by a present, and soon guardians found themselves obliged to do what lovers formerly had been willing to do. Instead of expecting presents from their to be sons-in-law, guardians found that they must not hope for a man to take unto himself a wife without being compensated in a manner for the extra responsibilities incurred. The young man still sought the maiden, but, with laudable foresight and thrift, he looked to the guardian to provide the means to keep the

bride—and, incidentally, the husband—in a proper state. Woman bade farewell to the “Souvenir” stage, and entered upon what may be described as “With a Pound of Tea” period. At first, Man was content with enough cash or kind to keep him and his bride for a year, or maybe two; but this again increased to ample for twice a lifetime of luxury and ease. Now, even that stage of progress has been passed, and, as an outcome, we have the “Emancipated Woman,” or “Man-Woman.” As yet, it is true that they are few in number, though mighty of speech and of pen. They are the epitome, the essence of woman, since dawn of the world, the natural development of man’s enlightenment. They are women for whom Man will not risk his life, whom Man will not buy, whom Man will not take as a gift, nor can Man be bribed to receive.

“MAN IS INFERIOR,”

ALLEGES GEORGE EGERTON.

Surely the fact of my having written a little book, for the love of writing it, not with a view to usher in a revolt, or preach a



GEORGE EGERTON.
(From a Photograph by
Russell & Sons.)

propaganda, merely to strike a few notes on phases of female character I knew to exist, hardly qualifies me to have an opinion, or present it to the average young man. Individually, I am quite content with the Average Man; if he is not peculiarly interesting he is always civil—at least to me—and I fancy some of the old methods of courting are hard to beat. It seems to me your whole problem rests on a false assumption: that “the average man will be at a great disadvantage in his attempts to intermarry with women intellectual enough to think for themselves.” Why should he? You lay a stress on intellect as if it plays the primal part in selection. I do not think it does—and I am

entirely sceptical as to the existence of the man who would be moved in his choice of a wife, as the manager of a stud farm in his choice of a mare, by a desire to form an alliance which would tend to the improvement of the race. This young man is an unknown species to me. I fancy the average young man is more likely to be influenced by a dimple, or a neat ankle, or some underlying muliebral qualities that he vaguely feels and cannot explain. Besides, I am at a disadvantage, as I do not quite know what the term "Advanced Woman" implies; to me it is a puff-ball of a word I see in newspapers. Passing in review all the most highly cultured, mentally most richly endowed women I have known—not *desexualised* (there is always a danger in that)—they all laboured under the common disability of a desire to be loved, or give love—as the poverty or richness of their nature had it—and I do not think the question of equal intellect, weighed as a huckster weighs sugar in a balance, would have arisen when their affections were engaged. In that lies the average man's consolation, even if he has to step off the pedestal he has hitherto occupied. The superiority of man has, I think, always been purely an economic one; and since the advancement of woman, in England at least, has become one of absolute expediency, making her a bread-winning, tax-paying member of the community—a fiction—one cannot lump man and woman together and say, "These are inferior, these are superior." The differentiations are too great, one must judge of them as individuals. Absolute equality in labour there never can be so long as there is, and must be, such an immense difference in primary sexual characteristics, and the functions of reproduction. But so far from the physiological disabilities of woman making her *inferior*, I hold that, being so closely interwoven as they are with the crowning glory of her existence, for she is a generic creature *par excellence*, they lift her high *above* man—make her always his Superior. The divinest fibre of her nature is her maternal instinct, she holds the whole destinies of the human race in herself, man plays only a subordinate part in the scheme of nature—the world belongs

to the mothers—and too often the best of her tenderness goes to that grown-child, man.

* * * *

It is a world of compensations. Say a woman who is successful in some way in art, literature, or a profession, perhaps with the proper neurotic temperament for artistic purposes, a woman



of intellect, meets with an average man, without much intellectuality, but possessed of sound intelligence and common sense, wholesome in mind and body, honourable and tender of her physical weakness (qualities not so rare in decent average men), and he pays her the honour of choosing her out of the world of women, offers her the best he knows how to give her—restful companionship—I think the exchange is fair. And unless the cultivation of her intellect has produced atrophy of her heart,

I cannot see how he will suffer by his marriage with her. She will have tact enough to make him feel proud of her brain, and tenderness enough to make him feel sure of her heart. Woman at her best will always be attracted by manly qualities in a man, and if the average man is only prepared to give as well as take; to realise that the woman he marries has a conscience, opinions, and feelings of her own; and to treat them with the same deference as he would extend, say, to those of a male chum, he may safely risk courting her—and as much in the old way as possible! I may be wrong—I only venture to say this with the greatest diffidence—but you see I don't know if I am an Advanced Woman!

THE COMING GIRL WILL BE NICE.

MRS. MANNINGTON CAFFYN.

Being myself as ignorant as the Middle Ages, I in no sort of way pose as "advanced." I cannot, therefore, presume to advise you as to how to court the Advanced Woman. Is it not, by the way, only very exceptionally that she will submit at all to be courted? If, however, you (collectively) feel that you must practise on her, her chosen organs will give you divers hints as to the methods she prefers. The A. W. is no doubt upsetting to the mind, and rather funny (to onlookers), but, after all, you've got yourselves to blame for her. For this reason, as well as for her undoubtedly intrinsic value, I should fancy it would be more to the point that you should suffer her gladly rather than woo her. You see, just now, she is so much occupied with other matters. By the pressure of Time, and the manners and customs of men, she has been forced to emerge from the darkness of her ignorance, and she's suffering a little from knowledge-shock, or more, perhaps, from an overdose of unassimilated knowledge, and it's disagreeing with her constitution and distorting her mental vision; but later on, no doubt, nature will re-assert herself, and woman, having assimilated her facts, will know how to apply them. I should have thought the coming girl, for whom the A. W. is only preparing the way, is she for whom you should renew your youth, and your courting powers. This young person, I fervently hope and trust, will be a softer, more tempered outcome of the A. W. She will have profited by many mistakes, learnt many new things, the first among them being



MRS. MANNINGTON CAFFYN.
(From a Photograph by H. E. Mendelssohn.)

that she must, once and for ever, cast from her the ways of the schoolmistress, and of the female prig ; that the chief uses of knowledge to women are to make them large, strong, honourable, reverent, and tender ; to fill them with pity, loving kindness, and humour—attributes only co-existent with a state



of knowledge and freedom ; and that the best thing in the whole wide world is to be natural, and the highest and the most to be desired, after the love of God, is the *true love* of man for woman. She will have learnt, however, other things less desirable in men's eyes ; she will have learnt the meaning and the nature of those powers with whom she has to contend for her rightful sovereignty over men's hearts. (She will have grown sane and simple then, and will have ceased to want to

rule their intellects). She will, in fact, have grown wise with full knowledge—not truculent, aggressive, preposterous, or merely smart with half-knowledge.

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Meanwhile, if men will let the belief in the goodness of women grow up again in their hearts, and, as they can no longer deceive and hoodwink them, will learn for their sakes, and for the sake of dear love, as much as in them lies, to reverence themselves, there will be no need for woman to teach them her methods of wooing. And between us we shall be able to bridge over the gulf—the hideous, unnatural gulf that now gapes between us—

and together we can go out and bring back from the desert where they now stand, weeping and astonished, dear old Courtship and True Love, and set them up again in our hearts in all their majesty ; and then jest and laughter will return to the land, and England will be Merry England once again ; and I daresay it's all very foolish and retrogradely sentimental, but the power, the tempered knowledge, and the sweet serenity of the coming girl, seem to me a lovely possibility, just as much of a possibility as that man will learn to dream of her, and to fit himself to be the father of a nobler, purer race—while he is still in the flower of his youth—of which she shall be the mother.

“DON'T ASK ME,”

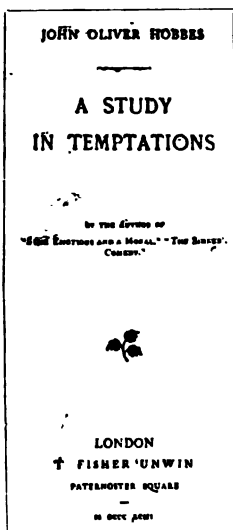
SAYS JOHN OLIVER HOBBS.

The “New Woman” does not interest “John Oliver Hobbes” at all. Mrs. Craigie says : “The temptation to court an ‘Advanced Woman’ is one which, I fancy, few men have had an opportunity of resisting. I myself have not met any members of the new sex, so I am unable to advise others how to approach them.” This would seem to imply an insufficient knowledge on her part of the manly readiness with which temptation can sometimes be sought and faced. The members of “the New Sex” vary individually as much as ordinary women. Some are physically attractive and mentally unattractive ; some are mentally attractive and physically repulsive. The confusing thing about the “Advanced Women” to the mere ordinary dweller in Philistia is the lack of a definite programme. There would seem to be a nebulous kind of idea floating about certain feminine clubs that Man is to be taken by the hand, admonished gently



“JOHN OLIVER HOBBS.”

of the error of his ways, and remodelled, at afternoon teas, into "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever," or else abolished altogether. As a matter of fact, the "Advanced Women" have quite lost sight of Man's physical superiority. Because a good many years have elapsed since we have had a revolution in England, it is by no means certain that there will never be another. If London were swept with grape shot from one end to the other, or a mouse appeared in the Advanced Woman's presence, what would become of her? She would call upon Man to defend her, and "slate" him afterwards for his savagery in *The New Gazette*.



"SHE MAY DO HER OWN COURTING,"

SUGGESTS LADY GREVILLE.

The question is a puzzling one! Will there be any courtship at all in the coming by-and-bye; will the gentleman propose by letter or send in his testimonials with his offer of marriage; or will the lady simply take up his character? In that case, I presume his brother-officers, his fellow-clubmen, or his valet, would be the best persons to apply to. They, at least, know him as he is, not as he wishes to appear, and to them he is no hero. Or perhaps the advanced woman in the future will do all the courting herself. Like Carmen, she will throw carnations at the man she fancies, and ever after bewitched, he will be forced to follow her, or she will simply express her wish to marry him as



LADY VIOLET GREVILLE.

girls are supposed to do in Leap-Year. Which reminds me of a Leap-Year party, where the men, all previously invited by the ladies, sat round on chairs, and the ladies asked them to dance and took them down to supper, so that the disagreeable men couldn't get partners and the popular ones received fifty invitations each, which narrowed the company and brought the males to their proper level. Modesty in such cases would become the attribute of men, and women must adopt some of the manly virtues, like the lady in the story who, when dying of drink, said to her husband : "What could I do ; it was the only vice you had left me ?"

* * * *

Compliments, from the beginning, must be done away with ; the new woman will have none of them. Smiles will follow suit ; fainting-fits have long ago been abolished. I doubt if looking into the heroine's eyes will be admissible, for their light will be so strong and steadfast they will pierce the soul of the recreant man who has not yet quite made up his mind whether he prefers Maud or Emily, and if his affection will stand the strain of marriage or not. Then his physique must be cultivated exceedingly ; he will have to pass the doctor's verdict ; and, like many of the army competitors, may fail. In that case, of course, he must withdraw his claims to the lady's hand at once. He must be intensely masculine ; at the same time he must show an innate feminine delicacy of demeanour in the affairs of life, which scarcely accords with the



brutalities of war and the roughness of the school-games through which he has passed. Marriage, limited as it is already—and growing yearly, 'tis said, more unfashionable—will be further complicated by pecuniary considerations. With rents and taxes rising, and the price of farms and stocks falling, a man had need be very much in love before he undertakes the possession of so expensive an article as the modern woman. No trivial round for her, no common task, but perpetual enjoyment, luxury, and unrest. A trip to Norway, a flying visit to Egypt, the race-course, the hunting-field, the theatre, society, yachting, a multitude of beautiful clothes, fine living, delicate dishes, are essential to her existence. And with it all her poor soul is never satisfied, her vagaries and whims in endless succession must be gratified by the husband. A marriage settlement ought to be, not a mere allowance of pin-money, but a “skiddle,” as Lady Twombley calls it in the “Cabinet Minister,” a schedule of wishes and requirements. Now, how is the cowardly tyrant, Man, going to arrange and combine all these multifarious interests with the capacity of his slender bank-book? Ah, well! Tyrants can always get what they want, and no doubt he will find some way out of the dilemma. Of one thing we may be sure, the lady will not sit at home and languish. She will be up and about, seeking “fresh woods and pastures new.”

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The Average Man is certainly no match for the Advanced Woman; and if she makes up her mind to eschew marriage altogether, which really seems the only logical outcome of her opinions, there is no doubt but that, outnumbered and outwitted, we must succumb to her superior dominion. Then, perhaps, we might return to primitive times, and man, like the peacock, spread his plumes in the sunshine to attract the woman's admiration, while she, plain, neatly dressed in men's clothes, and renouncing all claims to beauty, stood by scornful and recalcitrant. In reality,

money is the root of all evil now with the Advanced Woman. Those who are rich can mock, those who are poor must take what they can get, even as in the days of Horace, when the wife with a dowry arrogated to herself, we are told, "absolute control of her own estate, and an unbridled licence of action in things both small and great—a freedom, not only to violate all customs and cast aside the last shred of womanly modesty, but would even claim to dictate to her husband his conduct and his mode of life." Fourteen hundred years have passed since then, and the Advanced Woman has not yet got herself a sufficient dowry. The first demand of every wife should be unlimited pin-money; the first condition of courtship, a full-blown money-bag. With goodwill on both sides, a man's wooing may then lead to successful matrimony. But the quest of the Ideal Woman, as difficult and doubtful as that of the Holy Grail, had better be relegated to the next century. After all, to sum up—what price love?

"COURT HER WITH RESPECT,"

ADVISES MADAME SARAH GRAND.

Madame Sarah Grand has "very little to say on the subject, the answer seems to me to be such a simple one. There is only one way to court a woman, and that is with respect. So long as a man and a woman respect each other's individuality neither can have any just cause of complaint." But that is where the whole difficulty arises. If a man and woman, of strong individuality, are bound together in matrimony, and neither will give way, it doesn't matter whether the woman holds advanced views or not: friction is sure to ensue. The "Advanced Woman" will not concede anything. She is to "run the Universe" to suit herself; and when the universal shipwreck



MADAME SARAH GRAND
(From a Photograph by
H. S. Mendelssohn.)

comes, expects to have the best place in the lifeboat—a lifeboat built by Man, and which he is to steer into a port of refuge. The “Advanced Woman” simply holds her position to-day in virtue of Man’s tolerance and magnanimity.



She is indebted to his skill, courage, and ingenuity for the bread she eats, the materials for the clothes she wears, and her immunity from physical danger. It seems little to ask in return for all these advantages, that she should sew on Man’s shirt-buttons, preside at his dinner-table, and render, by a thousand little feminine ways, a life more comfortable, which is generally spent in shielding her from discomfort. The cry of the miscalled

“Advanced Woman” is, in most cases, dictated by intense selfishness, egotism, and vanity; the really “Advanced Woman” is the one who says little, and is constantly, yet unobtrusively, ameliorating the condition of her fellow mortals, be they men or women.

“ DEFERENTIAL DOMINATION REQUIRED,”

SUGGESTS MISS PENDERED.

In the first place, I submit that the “Advanced Woman” (if by “advanced” we mean the best mentally, morally, and sympathetically) does not so much require to be courted as convinced. The word “court,” I take it, signifies to solicit, cajole, persuade, or—as a slang term defines it—*canoodle*, and the so-called “New” woman is not to be *canoodled*. Either she falls in love or she doesn’t; and if she doesn’t, it is not necessarily due to any failure of method on the part of the man

who wants to marry her. He may, at all events, be sure that she is quite ready to wed the one who can command her respect, attract her senses, and assure her of his right to her, whether he be intellectually her superior, equal, or inferior. For the most highly-developed woman is not all brains, and there are to be found in the average man diverse other qualities as compelling and worthy of worship as intellectuality. Moreover, there ought to be less difficulty about coming to an understanding with an "Advanced Woman" than with the traditional one. The latter is hemmed in by pretences and the fear of what outsiders may say or think. The former should be free from such considerations, and, when a man has satisfied her that he is desirable, should be prepared to meet him with the frankest encouragement. Coyness and modesty are not confused in the mind of the "Advanced Woman."



MISS MARY L. PENDERED.

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I do not think there will ever be any real barrier between the sexes ; any gulf to be bridged—despite the alarming prognostications of certain writers who seem to ignore Dame Nature, and disregard, also, important facts bearing on the existing state of the balance in which masculinity and femininity must be weighed. It surely cannot be forgotten, by anyone who measures the subject at all, that reviled Man has gained a start of many thousand years on "Advanced Woman," and has secured a big majority which is quite in his power to maintain. So far, I think there is no doubt of his proper place in our system. He has been educated by responsibility into a decisiveness of character which raises him above woman—even the "Advanced Woman." She has been anti-individualised (to coin a word) by conventions which

have guarded her from temptations, the resistance of which only can develop moral fibre. Her natural inclinations, like her



ribs, have been cased in steel and whalebone. Should the time ever come when she is loosened (*emancipated* would be, I suppose, the correct word), she will have to face the travail and the struggle manhood faced long ages ago; and then we may be able to discuss equality. At present even the bravest and most gifted amongst us women are glad to lean upon men of strong character, knowing that in the quality we vaguely term force, our sex is decidedly lacking. We shall be happy to acknowledge man's superiority just so long as he makes

it manifest; and I privately believe (though I am almost afraid to state it) that the longer his reign extends the better we shall be pleased. But then, as it is unnecessary to say, I am not an "Advanced Woman," and I may be mistaken in this view.

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I have strayed from the "courting" question. With regard to the matter—I should say manner—of wooing, there is so little to be expounded, that I can recommend nothing, unless it be a kind of deferential domination, a peremptory homage. It is old-fashioned, but it tells. No woman—from a milkmaid to a mathematical M.A.—is quite proof against it; and she who is most self-reliant loves best to be mastered—albeit the hardest to master. For it were well to remember that the woman who is more than a gender in satin can only succumb to a man whose

character does not wither under her criticism, or put too heavy a strain upon her imagination. Thus, she is not to be overcome by courting or *canoodling*, but by the self-conviction that she has succeeded in annexing the finest fellow in the whole world, and the better half of herself; that she has elected the right monarch to guide and govern her little realm.

“A PROPER SPIRIT OF ENTERPRISE NEEDED.”

MISS ELLA HEPWORTH DIXON.

As an average—a very average—woman, I am filled with amazement that the editors of *The Idler* should concern themselves with so fantastic, so remote, a possibility as that which is at the moment disturbing the masculine serenity of the Club. For if, as Mr. Angus Evan Abbott in his contribution to the subject so courteously and humorously puts it: “The Advanced Woman is she for whom man will not risk his life, whom man will not buy, whom man will not take as a gift, nor can Man be bribed to receive,” one is not unnaturally tempted to inquire why printers’ ink should be wasted in discussing so bootless a topic?



MISS ELLA HEPWORTH DIXON.
(From a Photograph by Mrs.
Fred. Wilkinson.)

But stay; can it be that the Average Man is anxious to immolate himself; that the new movement has penetrated even his—dare one say it?—his somewhat impermeable epidermis? “*L’Amour*,” says the mystic Sar Peladan, in one of his discourses, “*l’amour n’est que la forme la plus douce de la douleur*,” and it may be—for these things, like murder and suicide, are eminently contagious—that the Average Man, spurred on by certain alluring three-volume novels, is anxious to try, in his own person, the effect of wedding what one may call the Prickly Young Person. . . . But if (as I very much doubt) the Average Man really wants the Advanced Woman, why, I will pay him the compliment to predict that it is “Lombard Street to

a China Orange" that he will get her—provided he sets about it in a proper spirit of enterprise.

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And yet the most cursory glance around relieves my mind of the fear of so distressing a contingency. Are there not, and will there not always be, plenty of Average Women who may be wedded by the most timorous Average Man? Does it require a



lantern and a special quest to find enough Advanced Men who might possibly prefer a life-companion with whom they might discuss, let us say, the evening paper, to Missy with her giggle and her conventional innocence? But the more pertinent question is, does the Advanced Woman feel any hankering after the Average Man? For, after all we will leave her, I presume, the supreme privilege of her sex, the privilege of saying "No!" A sprightly American journal recently suggested that if Lovely

Woman really wanted the ballot-box, why, of course, she was going to have it; but if, on the contrary, it was the ballot-box who wanted Lovely Woman, the odds were against the bulwark of national liberties. The moral, I fear, is easily applicable to the question in hand. But has intellectuality anything to do with love? If it has, why should a pre-eminently intellectual essayist deplore the hideous possibility of espousing a "noisy scullion" or an "acidulous virgin?" Why, if it has, did the great Elizabeth dote on a knavish fop, Goethe and Heine marry illiterate haus-fraus, Shelley fancy he was enamoured of Harriet, and Catherine of Russia choose so often and so indiscriminately?

No, no ; these things are "on the knees of the gods." We may depend upon it, that in the future, as in the past, the balance will be kept. It requires no spirit of prophecy to foresee that "the blind, rascally boy" may be left to do his own work. It is within the bounds of possibility that the Advanced Woman, like her immortal prototype, Rosalind, will choose "those that have beards that please" her. In short, in affairs of the affections, she may be trusted to have amiable human weaknesses, while we may not unconfidently look forward to the Average Man making, here and there, a little mistake, and occasionally marrying an intelligent, broad-minded woman.

"MAN MUST MAKE HIS OWN MUSIC."

DR. ARABELLA KENEALY.

The true Advanced Woman is not at all that latch-key licensed, tobacco-tainted, gala contaminated Frankenstein, which, created for the purpose of trampling beneath its grotesque proportions a patient footmark of progress, strides up and down the pages of modern literature. The veritable Advanced Woman is she who, pressed by necessity or touched by the conviction that to be a drone in a hive of workers (to-day of over-workers) is unworthy, has bravely precipitated herself out of a pink miasma of sloth and stagnation into the wholesome daylight of self-dependence and effort. This woman recognises that to deck herself in fine clothes which represent the toil and wear and tear of a daughter-ridden father, and lounge about life's street-corners until some man comes along to keep her, is not altogether the part nature meant her to play in the great human scheme. For woman was never intended to be a parasite upon the fruit of masculine labour. She was made worthier than that for worthier purposes. In the old days when Adam delved, and Eve not only



DR. ARABELLA KENEALY.

spun, but also preserved and baked and brewed, there was enough and to spare of toil in the home, but in these days, when not only linen but also clothes are bought ready-fashioned or are handed over to skilled labourers to be fashioned ; when preserving and baking and brewing are industries for the successful wielding of which men are exalted to peerages ; the hands of women, except of those poor rough ones who are charwoman, laundress, nurse, cook, needle-woman, and everything else, lie idle. She whose father or husband works hard enough, or makes others work hard enough, to enable her to live in sloth, does so by employing women lower in the social scale—cooks, housemaids, dressmakers, governesses, nurses—to perform the duties belonging to herself. “Society,” that tawdry artificial mistress idle women have set over us, would be outraged at the sight of a gentlewoman (how it sounds in this relation !) bearing in her own arms—no matter how fond and tender—her own baby into the Park or even into green country lanes, enjoying the dear mother’s pleasure of watching with her own eyes its small limbs grow strong. What an irony on all the great, grave mysteries of motherhood this is, that woman should lose caste by being seen to carry her baby ! Even the binding of supple, beautiful feet into masses of useless deformity is a trifle in comparison. It is time indeed that the Advanced Woman came. This latter has been ashamed to sit idle or spend her forces in the great Sahara of Society, while fathers and husbands and brothers are overdriven by the press of neccssitous times. She has, therefore, crossed the threshold of home, where there is nothing left for her to do, and, braving the terrible risk of being branded with the brand of “advancement,” has enrolled herself among the great army of Human Workers.

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How such a woman should be courted, who shall tell ? For beyond the one characteristic of being self-dependent in thought and actuality, such a woman is as different from her

fellows as woman is from woman—which is saying much. “I love you for the sake of what you are, and not of what you do,” must always be the key-note of attraction between men and women, because love is a thing of essentials, not of incidents. Given this key-

note, man must learn how to make his own music. The “unadvanced” woman (whom from the depths of my heart I pity most sincerely, as being the creature generally of untoward circumstance) has not needed much courting. Marriage was her sole market, and an oversolicitude to dispose of her wares—for the



market she carried it to is by no means ill-stocked—superseded the need for persuasion. The comely art of courtship has fallen much into disuse, but it begins now to show symptoms of revival under the stirring influence of the Advanced Woman. The stimulus to masculine self-development—for it must be remembered that the strongest of all incentives to human growth is the standard of excellence set up by one sex for the other—will be immense. With the springing up of this new woman, man who, in the long run, seeks the best, will reach up after her, and the next century will see a new man likewise.

People I Have Never Met.

By SCOTT RANKIN.

THE MAN OF THE FUTURE.



The Man of the future—*Log.* :—"I *will* be good! Oh, I *will* be good!"



BY W. L. ALDEN.

IT really looks as if the three-volume novel were doomed to disappear at an early date. What is to take its place is not so clear. That the public, which has so long been accustomed to take its novels in three volumes, will be satisfied with the comparatively homœopathic dose of a single volume may well be doubted. My own belief is that to the novel in three volumes will succeed the novel in six, eight, or a dozen band-boxes. Hitherto this form of publication has been adopted only by authors whose books neither the great libraries nor private readers would buy, but there are great possibilities in it. When you buy and read a three-volume novel, the exhausted volumes are, in nine cases out of ten, utterly valueless to you, and they

crowd your bookshelves merely because you have no means of getting rid of them. Whereas if you buy a novel in a series of twelve band-boxes or half-a-dozen large trunks, the band-boxes and the trunks would remain as useful possessions long after you had assimilated the wit and wisdom of their linings. Then, think how convenient it would be when travelling to read the outside of one's band-box, and thus avoid carrying a small library of books. I hope the Authors' Society will consider this method of publication, and inform the publishers that if the three-volume novel is abolished, authors will throw themselves into the arms of the trunk and band-box makers, who will issue novels in a shape at once cheaper and more useful than the three-volume form. The minor poets have long been in the habit of publishing most of their productions in band-box form, and they can be counted upon to give an enthusiastic support to any scheme which promises to render that form of publication more respectable in the eyes of the general public than it has hitherto been.

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Now that the Opium Commission has virtually finished its work, it is time we had a Commission to inquire into the influence of the vice of abstinence from tobacco. If the victims of this terrible vice would only practise it in secret, pity, rather than hostility, would be the predominant feeling towards them. But instead of abstaining in the seclusion of their own residences, they shamelessly abstain from tobacco in every form in the most public places, and under the gaze of innocence and youth. Much complaint has been made of late concerning the outrageous conduct of male, and especially of female, abstainers from tobacco, who force their way into railway smoking-carriages, and in spite of the protests of the other occupants, persistently abstain from smoking during the longest railway journey. It may

be asked why the smoker does not quietly continue to smoke, regardless of the presence of the abstainer. Of course this is practicable; but what decent and humane man can take any pleasure in smoking when there is seated opposite to him a middle-aged woman who is perhaps the mother of young and helpless children, but who shamelessly and sniffingly proclaims her vicious hatred of tobacco in every look and movement. The presence of the abstainer must necessarily cast a gloom over any railway compartment; and the smoker, filled with disgust and pity, loses all interest in his pipe. What is the most painful feature of the whole matter is that the abstainers have actually formed societies for the forcible suppression of smoking, and, not content with their own degradation, are striving to degrade all other men and women to their level. The remedy is, however, plain. If the abstainers have a right to crush smokers by law, smokers have a similar right to crush abstainers. We need a Parliamentary Commission which shall gather proofs of the wide extent of the vice of abstinence from tobacco, and of its terrible results. When this is done we shall be in a position either to prohibit abstinence from tobacco in all parts of the United Kingdom, or, at least, to make such prohibition a matter of local option. In any event, something must be done without further delay if we wish to save our sons and daughters from becoming open and habitual abstainers from tobacco.

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George Meredith's "Lord Ormont and his Aminta" contains at least one chapter—that in which Aminta and Weyburn swim together—which will live in the adoration of the reader side by side with the riverside chapter in "Richard Feverel." It is easy to say that such an incident is quite impossible. So, too, is Lord Ormont's treatment of his wife, upon which the whole

plot of the story hangs ; but to find fault with a book of George Meredith's merely because of its impossibilities, is as absurd as it would be to condemn the story of Aladdin on the ground that genii cannot be summoned merely by rubbing old brass lamps. "Lord Ormont and his Aminta" is not merely a great book. It is Himalayan, and dwarfs the merely Alpine heights to which other novelists have risen. I am curious to see if the inexplicable people who hold that "Esther Waters" is immoral will have any fault to find with Mr. Meredith's new book. The ending of the story is precisely the ending which it would have had in real life. It is the only artistic ending, but nevertheless Mr. Meredith, in his fearless loyalty to what art required, has placed himself in apparent hostility to one of the plainest canons of morality. The book teaches that a wife is justified in leaving her husband and living with her lover, provided she can be of more use to the world as a mistress than as a wife. Of course this is not what Mr. Meredith personally believes, and it is put forth as the defence which Weyburn and Aminta would naturally make for their conduct ; but that the book is a powerful and persuasive apology for adultery no intelligent reader can deny. It does not contain a line which the "young person" could not read without a blush, but it is immoral in a far deeper sense than are any of Zola's books, for I have yet to find in any one of the latter the smallest apology for vice.

Mr. Meredith has no more ardent admirer than myself, but I have never been able to admire his style. "Lord Ormont and his Aminta" is full of sentences that are simply perfect as expressions of the poetry, wisdom, and wit of the author ; but it also contains sentences, almost without number, so intricate and artificial in their construction that their meaning can only be fully grasped by the man who reads them standing on his head before a mirror. If the office of language is to convey ideas in the easiest and simplest way, then these distinctively Meredithian

sentences are miraculously bad. Fortunately Mr. Meredith is so great as to be beyond the reach of imitation. Otherwise there would be imitators of his style who would drive the reader to madness.

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The ambitious young poet who recently made a formal application for the post of Poet Laureate, and offered to furnish convincing proofs of his qualifications to wear the laurel, was only a little in advance of his time. Now that commissions in the army and navy, not to speak of positions in various branches of the Civil Service, are given to the victors in competitive examinations, it can only be a matter of a few years before every sort of office, from that of First Lord of the Treasury, down to that of a sandwich man, is filled by competitive examination. We shall see ambitious young curates cramming in order to win a bishopric, and crammers will advertise that "last year our pupils secured five bishoprics, and one archbishopric." The newspapers will give due notice of the annual examination for admission to the Cabinet, and we shall read that "Professor Macbeth yesterday won the position of Leader of the House, having 193 marks, to Mr. Balfour's 192, and Sir William Harcourt's 191. In that day the Laureateship will, as a matter of course, go to the man who can pass the best examination in prosody, ancient and modern, and who has written the best competitive poem. After all, this would not be half as absurd as it is to give to a delicate, near-sighted young fellow, whom nature designed for a clergyman, a commission in the navy merely because he is a better mathematician than some robust, dare-devil boy, who was born to be a sailor. If the Laureateship were to be given to the man who could write the best patriotic ode, and if Mr. Kipling could be induced to enter the contest, there could not be the slightest doubt as to who

would be our next Poet Laureate. Mr. Kipling is not as great a master of versification as either Mr. Swinburne or the real Mr. Morris, but he has written ballads that contain more true poetic genius to the square (or rather the lyrical) foot than any other Englishman of this or any age.

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Some day the men who write the advertisements for the publishers will presume too far on the meekness of authors, and there will be a series of beneficent assassinations which will throw Napoleon's noble act of shooting a single publisher far into the shade. The other day a publisher's advertisement set forth that Mr. Marion Crawford had written a new story entitled, "The Upper Birth," and everybody sadly supposed that the novelist had returned to the early theosophy of "Mr. Isaacs." The real name of the book was "The Upper Berth," and it had nothing whatever to do with reincarnation.

When Mr. Crawford writes of Roman society he has a field of his own, and he tills it with wonderful skill. Nothing better of its kind than his triad of "Saracinesca" stories could be desired, and I find myself reading them over and over again. But why does Mr. Crawford go out of his way to parade his sympathy with the papal party? And why does he mistake—to put it mildly—the facts of history? The other day I was re-reading "Sant' Ilario," and in the midst of the story I found the assertion that the Garibaldians, who took part in the Mentana campaign, were "a horde of brutal ruffians and half-grown lads, desperate in that delight of unbridled licence which has such attraction for the mob in all countries." Who were these ruffians? Among the leaders were Garibaldi and his sons; that veteran paladin of freedom, General Fabrizi; the Cairoli brothers; Nicotera, Acerbi, Mosto, Mario, Giovagnoli—men whose names will live for ever in the story of the making of Italy, while among

the rank and file were the flower of the young men of Italy. To call these men "brutal ruffians" is as absurd as it is malicious. Equally at variance with history is Mr. Crawford's assertion that Garibaldi "was routed on the 3rd and 4th of November by the papal forces." He was defeated (not routed) by the French troops and their chassepots—not by the papal forces, to whom he had given a sound beating at Monte Rotondo, and who did not dare to attack him until they had the support of the French infantry. Mr. Crawford sneeringly calls Garibaldi "the old gentleman," and says that "he possessed little or no military science"; and he also informs his readers that in Rome, at the date of the Mentana campaign, there was, "with the exception of a few turbulent spirits," "no revolutionary element," and that there were "very few who sympathised with the idea of Italian unification." This was in 1867, and yet three years later, the Romans voted almost unanimously for annexation to the Italian kingdom.

Mr. Crawford has a perfect right to his own political convictions, but he has no right to pervert history, or to insult the memory of brave men. He is somewhat older to-day than he was when he sneered at Garibaldi as "the old gentleman," and made an otherwise capital story the vehicle of the waspish feminine spite characteristic of that little clique of Romans who still long to be governed by priests. Let us hope that he will give us many more Roman stories, and in writing them will refrain from thrusting his private political views on the reader. I had almost forgotten to say that "The Upper Berth" is a rather slight but clever story, which, if it falls below Mr. Crawford's Italian stories, ranks decidedly above the rather dreary American stories which he has sometimes felt it his duty, as a good American, to write.

* * * *

Mr. W. D. Howells is another good man gone wrong. His early books, the "Foregone Conclusion," and the "Lady of the Aroostock," not to speak of several others, were among the best stories that America has produced. But in an evil moment Mr. Howells determined to become a distinctively American novelist, and thereupon he gave us a series of stories faithfully depicting the uninteresting lives of utterly uninteresting Americans, such as Silas Lapham and Bartley Hubbard. He has now taken a further step downward, and in his latest story, "A Traveller from Altruria," he gives us a sort of socialistic satire, from which we learn that a man who permits a servant to black his boots, and who wears a dress coat at dinner, is little better than a criminal.

If any one else had written this dreary stuff it would be a matter of comparatively little consequence. But it is a bitter thing that a man of Mr. Howell's delicate and poetic genius should waste his time and exasperate his warmest admirers by writing "A Traveller from Altruria." Why will Mr. Howells do it? A reformed world, in which every man should black his own boots, and sit down in a reefing jacket to a dinner of pork and beans, would certainly be purchased very dearly at the cost of the thoroughly great novels that Mr. Howells might write. Nothing is more sad than the spectacle of a great novelist wasting his time with such frivolities as socialism and the reformation of mankind.

* * * *

Moralists are constantly telling us that we must fight against our evil impulses, and subdue them. This is very well as far as it goes, but no one ever tells us to fight against our good impulses. Now, next to popular education, there is nothing so harmful to mankind as the good impulses to which we are

continually yielding. It was a good impulse—the impulse of pity for the poor and hungry miners—that induced thousands of people to aid in prolonging the coal strike last winter, by subscribing money for the support of the strikers. Where one miner made himself destitute by refusing to work, a hundred miserable people were made still more wretched by the rise in the price of coals, which made it impossible for them to warm themselves, or to cook their food. Thus every shilling which our pestilent good impulses led us to give to the miners prolonged the sufferings of innocent people. Then look for a moment at the despicable falsehoods which good impulses induce the critic to tell. When a friend writes a trashy book, or paints a poor picture, or inveigles a manager into producing a wretched play, we who may happen to be critics ought sternly to condemn the work. If we yield to our good impulses, and praise it, we make our friend happy, and, perhaps, fill the mouths of his wife and children and save him from despair; but we do a dishonest thing. Of course there are austere and inflexible critics, who would butcher any friend to give their consciences a holiday, but I frankly confess that I am not one of them; and if it should become necessary for me to criticise a novel written by a dear friend I should shamelessly perjure myself. Of course I should be guilty of a grave offence, and should deserve severe punishment, and no one would accept in mitigation my plea that I had been overpowered by a good impulse. We cannot watch against our good impulses too constantly, or crush them out too ruthlessly. They are horribly insidious, and we are never safe from their attacks even in our most brutal moods. The world will never become just, and virtuous, and unspeakably intolerable, until it is made a capital offence for any man to yield to a good impulse.

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The Anti-Gambling Society, if it proposes to be consistent, has a good deal of work cut out for it. For example, it should proceed at once against the weekly penny paper (its name is legion), which promises to pay, say, five hundred pounds to any man who may succeed in getting himself killed on a railway while he has a copy of the paper in his pocket. This game is called insurance, but it is purely a gambling transaction, in which the proprietor of the penny paper bets one penny to five hundred pounds that no man will be killed in a railway accident while in possession of the paper. The game has a great fascination for people with a fondness for gambling, and thousands of men who travel daily by rail, load themselves down with penny papers, in the hope of winning large sums. If this sort of thing is tolerated we shall soon be a nation of gamblers. It will not be long before clergymen will be undertaking to pay a thousand pounds to any man who dies during a sermon, provided he has first put a shilling in the plate, and doctors will insure their patients against death at the rate of a thousand pounds for a premium of one guinea. Perhaps the time will come when we shall all abandon our present occupations, and the whole world will live by gambling. I used to think that this would be impossible, but latterly I have learned that every man who gambles loses his money. It follows that no man who gambles ever wins any money, and further, that all the money staked in gambling is utterly and mysteriously annihilated. If a miracle like this can occur daily, all we need to do is to find the secret of the miracle and reverse its action. Then we shall all grow rich by betting with one another, which will be far easier than toiling at what the political economists call "productive industry."

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"Puddenhead Wilson," Mark Twain's latest story, is the work of a novelist, rather than of a "funny man." There is

plenty of humour in it of the genuine Mark Twain brand, but it is as a carefully painted picture of life in a Mississippi town in the days of slavery that its chief merit lies. In point of construction it is much the best story that Mark Twain has written, and of men and women in the book at least four are undeniably creations, and not one of them is overdrawn or caricatured, as are some of the most popular of the author's lay figures. There is but one false note in the picture, and that is the introduction of the two alleged Italian noblemen. These two young men are as little like Italians as they are like Apaches. When challenged to fight a duel, one of them, having the choice of weapons, chooses revolvers instead of swords. This incident alone is sufficient to show how little Italian blood there is in Mark Twain's Italians. But this is a small blemish, and if Mark Twain, in his future novels, can maintain the proportion of only two lay figures to four living characters, he will do better than most novelists. The extracts from "Puddenhead Wilson's Almanac," which are prefixed to each chapter of the book, simply "pizon us for more," to use Huck Finn's forcible metaphor. Let us hope that a complete edition of that unrivalled almanac will be issued at no distant day

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What to do with Anarchists is a question which no one has yet answered in a satisfactory way. Of course the Anarchist who commits a murder can be hung or guillotined, but how is the mere preacher of anarchy to be silenced without a violation of what is called the right of free speech? And yet the problem is not a difficult one. What the Anarchist pines for is anarchy. If we give him plenty of anarchy we are blessing instead of persecuting him. All the Anarchists in France should be placed on a man-of-war, and landed on an uninhabited island in the Pacific.

Each man should be supplied with thirty days' rations, five gallons of whisky, and one dozen of the best dynamite bombs. The most unlimited and delightful anarchy would at once begin, and at the end of the thirty days the man-of-war might revisit the island, and hang the surviving Anarchist, provided he actually did survive. There is no tyranny in supplying a man with what he professes to long for, and if any Anarchist objects to being sent to the anarchical island at public expense, and with his pockets filled with gratuitous bombs, his objections do not deserve consideration.



"BOHEMIAN EVENINGS."

The Stark Munro Letters.

As written by J. STARK MUNRO to his friend and former fellow-student, HERBERT SWANBOROUGH, of Lowell, Massachusetts, during the years 1881-84.

EDITED AND ARRANGED BY A. CONAN DOYLE.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE HUTCHINSON.

FOREWORD.

THE letters of my late friend, Dr. Stark Munro, appear to me to form so connected a whole, and to give so plain an account of some of the troubles which a young man may be called upon to face at the outset of his career, that I have handed them over to the gentleman who is about to edit them. There are two of them, the fifth and the ninth, from which some excisions are necessary, but, in the main, I hope that they may be reproduced as they stand, for I know that nothing could be more abhorrent to my friend's nature than that there should be any suppression of those opinions which he had deliberately formed. As to the propriety of the publication, I can only say that, after careful consideration, I have fully satisfied myself upon that head, for I am sure that there is no privilege which he would have valued more highly than the thought that some other young man, harassed by pecuniary troubles and by spiritual doubts, should gain strength by reading how a brother had passed down the valley of the shadow before him.

H. SWANBOROUGH.

Lowell, Massachusetts.

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Q

I.

I MISS you most dreadfully, my dear old Bertie, for you are the only man upon this whole earth to whom I have ever been able to unreservedly open my whole mind. I don't know why it is, for, now that I come to think of it, I have never enjoyed very much of your confidence in return. But that may be my fault. Perhaps you don't find me sympathetic, even though I have every wish to be. I can only say that I find you intensely so, and perhaps I presume too much upon the fact. But no, every instinct in my nature tells me that I don't bore you by my confidences.

Can you remember Cullingworth at the University? You never were much in the athletic set, and so it is possible that you don't. Anyway, I'll take it for granted that you don't, and explain it all *ab initio*. I'm sure that you would know his photograph, however, for the reason that he was the ugliest and queerest-looking man of our year.

Physically, he was a fine athlete—one of the fastest and most determined Rugby forwards that I have ever known, though he played so savage a game that he was never given his international cap. He was well-grown, five foot nine perhaps, with square shoulders, an arching chest, and a quick jerky way of walking. He had a square strong head bristling with short wiry black hair. His face was wonderfully ugly, but it was the ugliness of character, which is as attractive as beauty. His jaw and eyebrows were craggy and rough-hewn, his nose aggressive and red-shot, his eyes small and near-set, light blue in colour, and capable of assuming a very genial and also an exceedingly vindictive expression. A slight wiry moustache covered his upper lip, and his teeth were yellow, strong, and overlapping like those of an animal. Add to this that he seldom wore collar or necktie, that his throat was the colour and texture of the bark of a Scotch fir, and that he had a voice, and especially a laugh, like a bull's bellow: then you have some idea (if you can piece all these items together in your mind) of the outward James Cullingworth.

But the inner man, after all, was what was most worth noting. I don't quite know what genius is. Carlyle's definition always seemed to me to be a very crisp and clear statement of what it is not. Far from its being an infinite capacity for taking pains, its

leading characteristic, as far as I have ever been able to observe it, has been that it allows the possessor of it to attain results by a sort of instinct which other men could only reach by hard



" HIS SMALL EYES WOULD GLEAM "

work. In this sense Cullingworth was the greatest genius that I have ever known. He never seemed to work, and yet he took the anatomy prize over the heads of all the ten-hour-a-day men. That might not count for much,

for he was quite capable of idling ostentatiously all day, and then reading desperately all night, but start a subject of your own for him; and then see his originality and strength. Talk about torpedoes, and he would catch up a pencil, and on the back of an old envelope from his pocket he would sketch out some novel contrivance for piercing a ship's netting and getting at her side, which might no doubt involve some technical impossibility, but which would at least be quite plausible and new. Then, as he drew, his bristling eyebrows would contract, his small eyes would gleam with excitement, his lips would be pressed together, and he would end by banging on the paper with his open hand, and shouting in his exultation. You would think that his one mission in life was to invent torpedoes. But next instant, if you were to express surprise as to how it was that the Egyptian workmen elevated the stones to the top of the pyramids, out would come the pencil and envelope, and he would propound a scheme for doing that with equal energy and conviction. This ingenuity was joined to an extremely sanguine nature. As he paced up and down in his jerky quick-stepping fashion after one of these flights of invention he would take out patents for it, receive you as his partner in the enterprise, have it adopted in every civilised country, see all conceivable applications of it, count up his probable royalties, sketch out the novel methods in which he would invest his gains, and finally retire with the most gigantic fortune that has ever been amassed. And you would be swept along by his words, and would be carried every foot of the way with him, so that it would come as quite a shock to you when you suddenly fell back to earth again, and found yourself trudging the city street a poor student with Foster's "Physiology" under your arm, and hardly the price of your luncheon in your pocket.

I read over what I have written, but I can see that I give you no real insight into the demoniac cleverness of Cullingworth. His views upon medicine were most revolutionary, but I daresay I shall have a good deal to say about them in the sequel. With his brilliant and unusual gifts, his fine athletic record, his strange way of dressing (his hat on the back of his head and his throat bare), his thundering voice, and his ugly powerful face, he had quite the most marked individuality of any man that I have ever known.

Now you will think me very prolix about this man, but, as it looks as if his life might become entwined with mine, it is a subject of immediate interest to me, and I am writing all this for the purpose of reviving my own recollections as well as in the

hope of amusing and interesting you. So I must just give you one or two other impressions which may make his character more clear to you.

He had a dash of the heroic in him. On one occasion he was placed in such a position that he must choose between compromising a lady or springing out of a third-floor window. Without a moment's hesitation he hurled himself out of the window. As luck would have it, he fell through a large laurel bush on to a garden-plot which was soft with rain, and so escaped with a shaking and a bruising. If I have to say anything that gives a bad impression of the man, put that upon the other side.



"HE WOULD BE DRAGGED OFF."

He was fond of rough horse-play, but it was wiser to avoid it with him, for one could never tell what it might lead to. His temper was nothing less than infernal. I have seen him in the dissecting rooms begin to skylark with a fellow, and then in an instant the fun would go out of his face, his little eyes would gleam with fury, and the two would be rolling, worrying each other like dogs below the table. He would be dragged off, panting and speechless with fury, with his wiry hair bristling straight up like a fighting terrier's.

This pugnacious side of his character would be worthily used sometimes. I remember that an address which was being given to us by an eminent London specialist was much interrupted by a

fellow in the front row who kept on interjecting remarks. I suppose that he was drunk, though he seemed to know what he was about. The lecturer appealed to his audience at last. "These interruptions are insufferable, gentlemen," said he; "will no one free me from this annoyance?" "Hold your tongue—you, sir, on the front bench!" cried Cullingworth in his bull's bellow. "Perhaps you'll make me," said the fellow, turning a contemptuous face over his shoulder. Cullingworth closed his note-book, and began to walk down on the tops of the desks, to the delight of the three hundred spectators. It was fine to see the deliberate way in which he picked his way among the ink bottles. As he sprang down from the last bench on to the floor his opponent struck him a smashing blow full in the face. Cullingworth got his bulldog grip on him, however, and rushed him backwards out of the classroom. What he did with him I don't know, but there was a noise like the delivery of a ton of coals, and the champion of law and order returned with the sedate air of a man who had done his work. His eyes were like two damsons on each side of a piece of beetroot, but we gave him three cheers as he made his way back to his seat. Then we went on with the dangers of *Placenta Prævia*.

He was not a man who drank hard, but a little drink would have a very great effect upon him. Then it was that the ideas would surge from his brain, each more fantastic and ingenious than the last. And if ever he did get beyond the borderland he would do the most amazing things. Sometimes it was the fighting instinct that would possess him, sometimes the preaching, and sometimes the comic, or they might come in succession, replacing each other so rapidly as to bewilder his companions. Intoxication brought all kinds of queer little peculiarities with it. One of them was that he could walk or run perfectly straight, but that there always came a time when he unconsciously turned upon his tracks and retraced his steps again. This had a strange effect sometimes, as in the instance of which I am going to tell you.

Very sober to outward seeming, but in a turmoil within, he went down to the station one night and, stooping to the pigeon-hole, asked the ticket clerk, in the suavest voice, whether he could tell him how far it was to London. The official put forward his face to reply, when Cullingworth drove his fist through the little hole with the force of a piston. The clerk flew backwards off his stool, and his yell of pain and indignation brought some police and railway men to his assistance. They

pursued Cullingworth, but he, as active and as fit as a greyhound, outraced them all, and vanished into the darkness down the long straight street. The pursuers had stopped, and were gathered in a knot under a lamp-post talking the matter over, when, looking up, they saw, to their amazement, the man whom they were after, running at the top of his speed in their direction. His little



"THEY PURSUED CULLINGWORTH."

peculiarity had asserted itself, you see, and he had unconsciously turned in his flight. They tripped him up, flung themselves upon him, and, after a long and desperate struggle, got him to the police station. He was charged before the magistrate next morning, but made such a brilliant speech from the dock in his

own defence that he carried the court with him, and escaped with a nominal fine. At his invitation the witnesses and the police trooped after him to the nearest hotel, and the affair ended in universal whisky-and-sodas.

Well now, if, after all these illustrations, I have failed to give you some notion of the man—able, magnetic, unscrupulous, violent, many-sided—I must despair of ever doing so. I'll suppose, however, that I have not failed, and I will proceed to tell you, my most patient of confidants, something of my personal relations with Cullingworth.

When I first made a casual acquaintance with him he was a bachelor. At the end of a long vacation, however, he met me in the street, and told me in his loud-voiced, volcanic, shoulder-slapping way that he had just been married. At his invitation I went up with him then and there to see his wife, and as we walked he told me the history of his wedding, which was as extraordinary as everything else he did. I won't tell it to you here, my dear Bertie, for I feel that I have dived down too many side-streets already, but it was a most bustling business, in which the locking of a governess into her room, and the dyeing of Cullingworth's hair, played prominent parts. *Apropos* of the latter, he was never quite able to get rid of its traces, and from this time forward there was, added to his other peculiarities, the fact that when the sunlight struck upon his hair at certain angles it turned it all iridescent and shimme.ing.

Well, I went up to his lodgings with him, and was introduced to Mrs. Cullingworth. She was a timid little sweet-faced, grey-eyed woman, quiet-voiced and gentle-mannered. You had only to see the way in which she looked at him to understand that she was absolutely under his control, and that, do what he might, or say what he might, it would always be the best thing to her. She could be obstinate, too, in a gentle dove-like sort of way, but her obstinacy lay always in the direction of backing up his sayings and doings. This, however, I was only to find out afterwards, and at that, my first visit, she impressed me as being one of the sweetest little women that I had ever known.

They were living in the most singular style in a suite of four small rooms over a grocer's shop. There was a kitchen, a bedroom, a sitting-room, and a fourth room, which Cullingworth insisted upon regarding as a most unhealthy apartment and a focus of disease, though I am convinced that it was nothing more than the smell of cheeses from below which had given him

the idea. At any rate, with his usual energy, he had not only locked the room up, but had gummed varnished paper over all the cracks of the door to prevent the imaginary contagion from spreading. The furniture was of the sparest. There were, I remember, only two chairs in the sitting-room, so that when a guest came (and I think I was the only one) Cullingworth used to squat upon a pile of yearly volumes of the *British Medical Journal* in the corner. I can see him now, levering himself up from his lowly seat and striding about the room, roaring and striking with his hands, while his little wife sat mum in the corner, listening to him with love and admiration in her eyes. What did we care, any one of the three of us, where we sat or how we lived as long as youth throbbed hot in our veins and our souls were all aflame with the possibilities of life! I look upon those Bohemian evenings in the bare room amid the smell of the cheese as being among the happiest that I have known.

I was a frequent visitor to the Cullingworths, for the pleasure that I got was made the sweeter by the pleasure which I hoped that I gave. They knew no one, and desired to know no one, so that socially I seemed to be the only link that bound them to the world. I even ventured to interfere in the details of their little *ménage*. Cullingworth had a fad at the time that the diseases of civilisation were due to the abandonment of the out-of-door life of our ancestors, and, as a corollary, he kept all his windows open day and night. As his wife was obviously fragile, and yet would have died before she would have uttered a word of complaint, I took it upon myself to point out to him that the cough from which she suffered was hardly to be cured as long as she spent her life in a draught. He scowled savagely at me for interference, and I thought we were on the verge of a quarrel, but it blew over, and he became more considerate in the matter of ventilation.

Our evening occupations just about that time were of a most extraordinary character. You are aware that there is a substance called waxy matter which is deposited in the tissues of the body during the course of certain diseases. What this may be and how it is formed has been a cause for much bickering among pathologists. Cullingworth had strong views upon the subject, holding that the waxy matter was really the same thing as the glycogen which is normally secreted by the liver. But it is one thing to have an idea, and another to be able to prove it. Above all, we wanted some waxy matter with

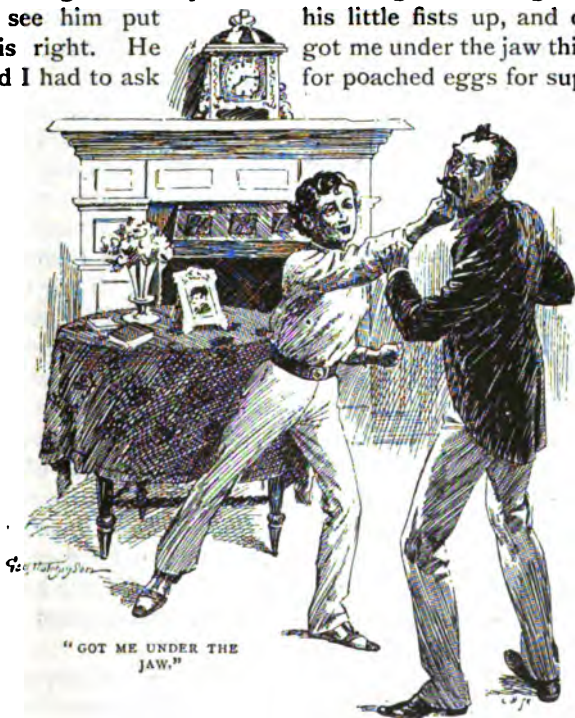
which to experiment. But fortune favoured us in the most magical way. The Professor of Pathology had come into possession of a magnificent specimen of the condition. With pride he exhibited the organ to us in the classroom before ordering his assistant to remove it to the ice-chest, preparatory to its being used for microscopical work in the practical class. Cullingworth saw his chance and acted on the instant. Slipping out of the classroom he threw open the ice-chest, rolled his ulster round the dreadful glistening mass, closed the chest again, and walked quietly away. I have no doubt that to this day the disappearance of that waxy liver is one of the most inexplicable mysteries in the career of our Professor.

That evening, and for many evenings to come, we worked upon our liver. Nothing came of all our work, for, though Cullingworth considered that he had absolutely established his case, and wrote long screeds to the medical papers upon the subject, he was never good at stating his views with his pen, and he left, I am sure, a very confused idea on the minds of his readers as to what it was that he was driving at. Again, as he was a mere student without any letters after his name, he got scant attention, and I never heard that he gained over a single supporter.

At the end of the year we both passed our examinations, and became duly-qualified medical men. The Cullingworths vanished away, and I never heard any more of them; for he was a man who prided himself upon never writing a letter. His father had formerly had a very large and lucrative practice in the West of Scotland, but he had been dead some years. I had a vague idea, founded upon some chance remark of his, that he had gone to see whether the family name might still stand him in good stead there. As for me, I began, as you will remember I explained in my last,* by acting as assistant in my father's practice. You know, however, that at its best it is not worth more than £500 a year, with no room for expansion. This is not large enough to keep two of us at work. Then, again, I can see that my religious opinions annoy the dear old man. Why express them? you will say. Well, I try to keep the muzzle on, but there are times when I can see that his acute brain, hampered only by its early training, is struggling through the darkness and towards the light. Then I try to give him a hand, and with my blunt tongue I overdo it and shock him into a reaction. On the whole, and for every reason, I think that

* The letter alluded to has, unfortunately, been lost.—H. S.

it would be better if I were out of this. I applied for several steamship lines, and for at least a dozen house surgeons, but there is as much competition for a miserable post with a hundred a year as if it were the Viceroyship of India. Usually, I simply get my testimonials returned without any comment, which is the sort of thing that teaches a man humility. Of course, it is very pleasant to live with the Mater, and my little brother Paul is a regular trump. I am teaching him boxing, and you should see him put his little fists up, and counter with his right. He got me under the jaw this evening, and I had to ask



And all this brings me up to the present time and the latest news. This is that I had a telegram from Cullingworth this morning—after nine months' silence. It was dated from Avonmouth, the town where I had suspected that he had settled, and it said simply, "Come at once. I have urgent need of you. —CULLINGWORTH." Of course, I shall go by the first train tomorrow. It may mean anything or nothing. In my heart of hearts I hope and believe that old Cullingworth sees an opening for me, either as his partner or in some other way. I always believed that he would turn up trumps, and make my fortune

as well as his own. He knows that I would work like a horse. So that's what I've been up to all along, Bertie, that to-morrow I go to join Cullingworth, and that it looks as if there was to be an opening for me at last. I gave you a sketch of him and his ways so that you may take an interest in the development of my fortune, which you could not do if you did not know something of the man who is holding out his hand to me.

Yesterday was my birthday, and I was two and twenty years of age. For two and twenty years have I adhered by the soles of my feet, and swung round the sun. And in all seriousness, without a touch of levity, and from the bottom of my soul, I assure you that I have at the present moment the very vaguest idea as to whence I have come from, or whither I am going, or what I am here for. It is not for want of inquiry, or from indifference. I have mastered the principles of several religions. They have all shocked me by the violence which I should have to do to my reason to accept any one of them. Their ethics are usually excellent. So are the ethics of the Common Law of England. But the scheme of creation upon which those ethics are built! Well, it really is to me the most astonishing thing that I have seen in my short earthly pilgrimage that so many able men, deep philosophers, astute lawyers, and clear-headed men-of-the-world should accept such an explanation of the facts of life. In the face of their concurrence my own poor little opinion would not dare to do more than lurk at the back of my soul, were it not that I take courage when I reflect that the equally eminent lawyers and philosophers of Rome and Greece were all agreed that Jupiter had numerous wives, and was fond of a glass of good wine.

Mind, my dear Bertie, I do not wish to run down your view or that of any other man. We who claim toleration should be the first to extend it to others. I am only indicating my own position, as I have often done before. And I know your reply so well. Can't I hear your grave voice saying, "Have faith"? Your conscience allows you to. Well, mine won't allow me; I see so clearly that faith is not a virtue, but a vice. It is a goat which has been herded with the sheep. If a man deliberately shut his eyes and refused to use them, you would be as quick as anyone in seeing that it was immoral and a treason to Nature. And yet you would counsel a man to shut that far more precious gift the Reason, and to refuse to use it in the most intimate question of life.

"The reason cannot help in such a matter," you reply. I answer that to say so is to give up a battle before it is fought. My reason *shall* help me, and when it can help no longer I shall do without help.

It's late, Bertie, and the fire's out, and I'm shivering, and you, I am very sure, are heartily weary of my gossip and my heresies, so adieu until my next.

II.

WELL, my dear Bertie, here I am again in your postbox. It's only a fortnight since I wrote you that great long letter, and yet you see I have news enough to make another formidable budget. They say that the art of letter-writing has been lost, but, if quantity may atone for quality, you must confess that (for your sins) you have a friend who has retained it.

When I wrote to you last I was on the eve of going down to join the Cullingworths at Avonmouth, with every hope that he had found some opening for me. I must tell you at some length the particulars of that expedition.

I travelled down part of the way with young Leslie Duncan, whom I think you know. He was gracious enough to consider that a third-class carriage and my company were to be preferred to a first-class with solitude. You know that he came into his uncle's money a little time ago, and, after a first delirious outbreak, he has now relapsed into that dead heavy state of despair which is caused by having everything which he can wish for. How absurd are the ambitions of life when I think that I, who am fairly happy and as keen as a razor-edge, should be struggling for that which I can see has brought neither profit nor happiness to him! And yet if I can read my own nature it is not the accumulation of money which is my real aim, but only that I may acquire so much as will relieve my mind of sordid cares, and enable me to develop any gifts which I may have, undisturbed. My tastes are so simple that I cannot imagine any advantage which wealth can give—save, indeed, the exquisite pleasure of helping a good man or a good cause. Why should people ever take credit for charity when they must know that they cannot gain as much pleasure out of their guineas in any other fashion? I gave my watch to a broken schoolmaster the other day



"KNOCKED ME OFF MY BALANCE."

(having no money in my pocket), and my mother could not quite determine whether it was a trait of madness or of nobility. I could have told her with absolute confidence that it was neither the one nor the other, but a sort of epicurean selfishness, with perhaps a little dash of swagger away down at the bottom of it. What had I ever had from my chronometer like the quiet thrill of satisfaction when the fellow brought me the pawnticket and told me that the thirty shillings had been useful.

Leslie Duncan got out at Carstairs, and I was left alone with a hale, white-haired old Roman Catholic priest who had sat quietly reading his office in the corner. We fell into the most intimate talk, which lasted all the way to Avonmouth—indeed, so interested was I that I very nearly passed through the place without knowing it. Father Logan (for that was his name) seemed to me to be a beautiful type of what a priest should be, self-sacrificing and pure-minded, with a kind of simple cunning about him, and a deal of innocent fun. He had the defects as well as the virtues of his class, for he was absolutely reactionary in his views. We discussed religion with fervour, and his theology was somewhere about the early pliocene. He might have chatted the matter over with a priest of Charlemagne's court, and they would have shaken hands after every sentence. He would acknowledge this, and claim it as a merit. It was consistency in his eyes. If our astronomers and inventors and lawgivers had been equally consistent, where would modern civilisation be? Is religion the only domain of thought which is non-progressive, and to be referred for ever to a standard set two thousand years ago? Can they not see that, as the human brain evolves, it must take a wider outlook? A half-formed brain makes a half-formed God, and who shall say that our brains are even half-formed yet? The true inspired priest is the man or woman with the big brain. It is not the shaven patch on the outside, but it is the sixty ounces within which is the true mark of election.

You know that you are turning up your nose at me, Bertie; I can see you do it. But I'll come off the thin ice, and you shall have nothing but facts now. I'm afraid that I should never do for a story-teller, for the first stray character that comes along puts his arm in mine and walks me off with my poor story straggling away to nothing behind me.

Well, then, it was night when we reached Avonmouth, and when I popped my head out of the carriage window, the first thing that my eyes rested upon was old Cullingworth standing in the

circle of light under a gas-lamp. His frock coat was flying open, his waistcoat unbuttoned at the top, and his hat (a top-hat this time) jammed on the back of his head, with his bristling hair spurting out in front of it. In every way, save that he wore a collar, he was the same Cullingworth as ever. He gave a roar of recognition when he saw me, hustled me out of my carriage, seized my carpet bag, and a minute later we were striding along together through the streets.

I was, as you may imagine, all in a tingle to know what it was that he wanted with me. However, as he made no allusion to it, I did not care to ask, and during our longish walk we talked about indifferent matters. It was football first, I remember—whether Richmond had a chance against Blackheath, and



"OLD CULLINGWORTH."

the way in which the new passing game was shredding the old scrimmages. Then he got on to inventions, and became so excited that he had to give me back my bag in order that he might be able to slap all his points home with his fist upon his palm. I can see him now stopping with his face leaning forward and his yellow tusks gleaming in the lamplight.

"My dear Munro"—this was the style of the thing—"why was armour abandoned—eh? What! I'll tell you why. It was

because the weight of metal that would protect a man who was standing up was more than he could carry. But battles are not fought nowadays by men who are standing up. Your infantry are all lying on their stomachs, and it would take very little to protect them. And steel has improved, Munro! Chilled steel! Bessemer! Bessemer! Very good. How much to cover a man? Fourteen inches by twelve, meeting at an angle so that the bullet will glance. A notch at one side for the rifle. There you have it, laddie, the Cullingworth patent portable bullet-proof shield. Weight? Oh, the weight would be sixteen pounds. I worked it out. Each company carries its shields in gocarths, and they are served out on going into action. Give me twenty thousand good shots, and I'll go in at Calais and come out at Pekin. Think of it, my boy! the moral effect. One side gets home every time, and the other plasters their bullets up against steel plates. No troops would stand it. The nation that gets it first will pitchfork the rest of Europe over the edge. They're bound to have it—all of them. Let's reckon it out. There's about eight million of them on a war-footing. Let us suppose that only half of them have it. I say only half, because I don't want to be sanguine. That's four million, and I should take a royalty of four shillings on wholesale orders. What's that, Munro? About three-quarters of a million sterling. Eh? How's that, laddie? Eh? What?"

Well, really, that is not unlike his style of talk, now that I come to read it over, only you miss the queer stops, the sudden confidential whispers, the roar with which he triumphantly answered his own questions, the shrugs and slaps and gesticulations. But not a word all the time as to what it was that made him send me that urgent wire which brought me to Avonmouth.

I had of course been puzzling in my mind as to whether he had succeeded or not, though, from his cheerful appearance and buoyant talk, it was tolerably clear to me that all was well with him. I was, however, surprised when, as we walked along a quiet curving avenue with great houses standing in their own grounds upon either side, he stopped and turned in through the iron gate which led up to one of the finest of them. The moon had broken out and shone upon the high-peaked roof and upon the gables at each corner. When he knocked, it was opened by a footman with red plush knee-breeches. I began to perceive that my friend's success must have been something colossal.

When we came down to the dining-room for supper Mrs. Cullingworth was waiting there to greet me. I was sorry to see that she was pale and weary looking. However, we had a merry meal in the old style, and her husband's animation reflected itself upon her face, until at last we might have been back in the little



"'I AM UTTERLY, HOPELESSLY, AND IRRETRIEVABLY RUINED.'"

room with the frying-pan, instead of in the great oak-furnished picture-hung chamber to which we had been promoted. All the time, however, not one word as to the object of my journey.

When the supper was finished, Cullingworth led the way into a small sitting-room, where we both lit our pipes, and Mrs.

Cullingworth her cigarette. He sat for some little time in silence, and then, bounding up, he rushed to the door and flung it open. It was always one of his peculiarities to think that people were conspiring against him, or listening to him, for, in spite of his superficial brusqueness and frankness, a strange vein of suspicion ran through his singular and complex nature. Having satisfied himself now that there were no eavesdroppers, he threw himself down into his armchair.

"Munro," said he, prodding at me with his pipe, "what I wanted to tell you is that I am utterly, hopelessly, and irretrievably ruined."

My chair was tilted on its back legs as he spoke, and I assure you that I was within an ace of going over. Down like a pack of cards came all my dreams as to the grand results which were to come from my journey to Avonmouth. Yes, Bertie, I am bound to confess it, my first thought was of my own disappointment, and my second of the misfortune of my friends. He had the most diabolical intuitions, or else I have a very tell-tale face, for he added at once :

"Sorry to disappoint you, my boy. That's not what you expected to hear, I can see."

"Well," I stammered, "it is rather a surprise, old chap. I thought from the—from the——"

"From the house and the footman and the furniture," said he—"well, they've eaten me up among them—licked me clean, bones and gravy. I'm done for, my boy, unless——" here I saw a question in his eyes—"unless some friend were to lend me his name on a bit of stamped paper."

"I can't do it, Cullingworth," said I, "it's a beastly thing to have to refuse a friend, and if I had money——"

"Wait till you're asked, Munro," he interrupted, with his ugliest of expressions. "Besides, as you have nothing and no prospects, what earthly use would *your* name on a paper be?"

"That's what I want to know," said I, feeling a little mortified none the less.

"Look here, laddie," he went on, "d'you see that pile of letters on the left of the table?"

"Yes."

"Well, those are duns. And d'you see those documents on the right? Well, those are County Court summonses. And now d'you see that?" he picked up a little ledger, and showed me three or four names scribbled on the first page.

"That's the practice," he roared, and laughed until the great veins jumped out on his forehead. His wife laughed heartily also, just as she would have wept had he been so disposed.

"It's this way, Munro," said he, when he had got over his paroxysm. "You have probably heard—in fact, I have told you myself—that my father had the finest practice in Scotland. As



"HE JUMPED UP."

far as I could judge, he was a man of no capacity, but, still, there you are—he had it."

I nodded and smoked.

"Well, he's been dead seven years, and fifty nets dipping into his little fish-pond. However, when I passed, I thought my best move was to come down to the old place, and see whether I couldn't piece the thing together again. The name

ought to be worth something, I thought. But it was no use doing the thing in a half-hearted way. Not a bit of use in that, Munro. The kind of people who came to him were wealthy, and must see a fine house and a man in livery. What chance was there of gathering them into a bow-windowed forty-pound-a-year house with a grubby-faced maid at the door? What d'you suppose I did? My boy, I took the governor's old house that was unlet. The very house that he kept up at five thousand a year. Off I started in rare style, and sank my last cent in furniture. But it's no use, my boy. I can't hold on any longer. I got two accidents and an epileptic—twenty-two pounds eight and sixpence—that's the lot!"

"What will you do, then?"

"That's what I wanted your advice about. That's why I wired for you. I always respected your opinion, laddie, and I thought now was the time to have it."

It struck me that if he had asked it nine months before there would have been more sense in it. What on earth could I do when affairs were in such a tangle? However, I could not help feeling complimented when so independent a fellow as Cullingworth turned to me in this way.

"You really think," said I, "that it is no use holding on here?"

He jumped up, and began pacing the room in his swift jerky way.

"You take warning from it, Munro," said he—"you've got to start yet. Take my tip and go where no one knows you. People will trust a stranger quick enough, but if they can remember you as a little chap who ran about in knickerbockers, and got spanked with a hair-brush for stealing plums, they are not going to put their lives in your keeping. It's all very well to talk about friendship and family connections, but when a man has a pain in the stomach he doesn't care a toss about all that. I'd stick it up in gold letters in every medical classroom—have it carved across the gate of the University—that if a man wants friends he must go among strangers. It's all up here, Munro, so there's no use in advising me to hold on."

I asked him how much he owed. It came to about seven hundred pounds. The rent alone was two hundred. He had already raised money on the furniture, and his whole assets came to less than a tenner. Of course, there was only one possible thing that I could advise.

"You must call your creditors together," said I—"they can see for themselves that you are young and energetic—sure to succeed sooner or later. If they push you into a corner now they can get nothing. Make that clear to them. But if you make a fresh start elsewhere and succeed, you may pay them all in full. I cannot see any other possible way out of it."

"I knew that you'd say that, and it's just what I thought myself. Isn't it, Hetty? Well, then, that settles it, and I am much obliged to you for your advice, and that's all we'll say about the matter to-night. I've made my shot and missed. Next time I shall hit, and it won't be long either."

His failure did not seem to weigh very heavily on his mind, for in a few minutes he was shouting away as lustily as ever. Whisky and hot water were brought in so that we might all drink luck to the second venture.

And this whisky led us to what might have been a troublesome affair. Cullingworth, who had drunk off a couple of glasses, waited until his wife had left the room, and then began to talk of the difficulty of getting any exercise now that he had to wait in all day in the hope of patients. This led us round to the ways in which a man might take his exercise indoors, and that to boxing. Cullingworth took a couple of pair of gloves out of a cupboard, and proposed that we should fight a round or two then and there.

If I hadn't been a fool, Bertie, I should never have consented. It's one of my many weaknesses, that whether it's a woman or a man, anything like a challenge sets me off. But I knew Cullingworth's ways, and I told you in my last what a lamb of a temper he has. None the less we pushed back the table, put the lamp on a high bracket, and stood up to one another.

The moment I looked him in the face I smelt mischief. He had a gleam of settled malice in his eye. I believe it was my refusal to back his paper which was running in his head. Anyway, he looked as dangerous as he could look, with his scowling face sunk forward a little, his hands down near his hips (for his boxing, like everything else about him, is unconventional), and his jaw set like a rat-trap.

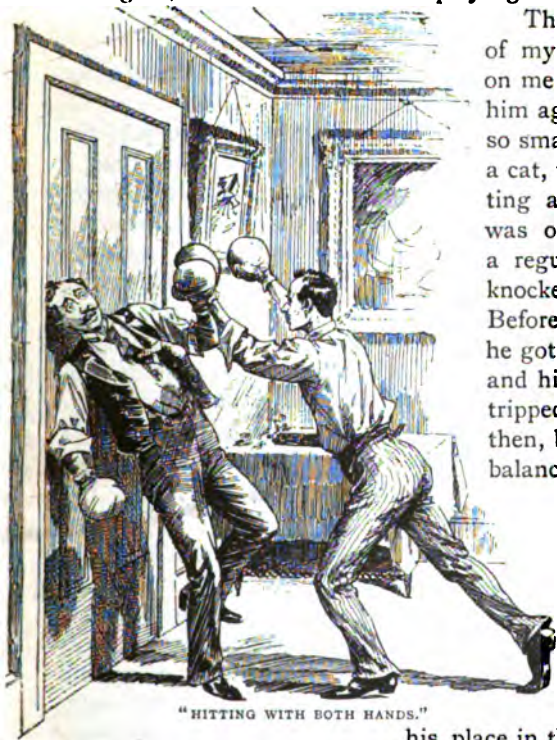
I led off, and then in he came hitting with both hands, and grunting like a pig at every blow. From what I could see of him he was no boxer at all, but just a formidable rough-and-tumble fighter. I was guarding with both hands for half a minute, and then was rushed clean off my legs and banged up against the door with my head nearly through one of the panels. He wouldn't

stop then, though he saw that I had no room to get my elbows back, and he let fly a right-hander which would have put me into the hall if I hadn't slipped it and got back to the middle of the room.

"Look here, Cullingworth," said I, "there's not much boxing about this game."

"Yes, I hit pretty hard, don't I?"

"If you come boring into me like that I'm bound to hit you out again," I said. "I want to play light if you'll let me."



The words were not out of my mouth before he was on me like a flash. I slipped him again, but the room was so small, and he as active as a cat, that there was no getting away from him. He was on me once more with a regular football rush that knocked me off my balance. Before I knew where I was he got his left on the mark, and his right on my ear. I tripped over a footstool, and then, before I could get my balance, he had me on the same ear again, and my head was singing like a tea-kettle. He was as pleased as possible with himself, blowing out his chest and slapping it with his palms as he took his place in the middle of the room.

"Say when you've had enough, Munro," said he.

This was pretty stiff, considering that I have two inches the better of him in height, and as many stone in weight, besides being the better boxer. His energy and the size of the room had been against me so far, but he wasn't to have all the slogging to himself in the next round if I could help it.

In he came with one of his windmill rushes. But I was on the look-out for him this time. I landed him with my left a regular nose-ender as he came, and then, ducking under his left, I

got him a cross-counter on the jaw that laid him flat across his own hearthrug. He was up in an instant with a face like a madman.

"You swine!" he shouted. "Take those gloves off and put your hands up!" He was tugging at his own to get them off.

"Go on, you silly ass!" said I. "What is there to fight about?"

He was mad with passion, and chucked his gloves down under the table.

"By Crums, Munro!" he cried, "if you don't take those gloves off, I'll go for you whether you have them or not."

"Have a glass of soda-water," said I.

He made a crack at me. "You're afraid of me, Munro. That's what's the matter with you," he snarled.

This was getting too hot, Bertie. I saw all the folly of the thing. I believe that I could lick him, but at the same time, I knew that we were so much of a match that we would both get pretty badly cut up without any possible object to serve. For all that I took my gloves off, and I think, perhaps, it was my wisest course after all. If Cullingworth once thought he had the whiphand of you, you might be sorry for it afterwards.

But, as fate would have it, our little barney was nipped in the bud. Mrs. Cullingworth came into the room at that instant, and screamed out when she saw her husband. His nose was bleeding, and his chin was all slobbered with blood, so that I don't wonder that it gave her a turn.

"James!" she screamed; and then to me, "What is the meaning of this, Mr. Munro?"

You should have seen the hatred in her dove's eyes. I felt an insane impulse to pick her up and kiss her.

"We've only been having a little spar, Mrs. Cullingworth," said I. "Your husband was complaining that he never got any exercise."

"It's all right, Hetty," said he, pulling his coat on again. "Don't be a little stupid. Are the servants gone to bed? Well, you might bring some water in a basin from the kitchen. Sit down, Munro, and light your pipe again. I have a hundred things that I want to talk to you about."

So that was the end of it, and things went smoothly for the rest of the evening. But for all that the little wife will always look upon me as a brute and a bully, while as to Cullingworth—well, it's rather difficult to say what Cullingworth thinks about the matter.

When I woke next morning he was in my room, and a funny looking object he was. His dressing-gown lay on a chair, and he

was putting up a fifty-six pound dumb-bell without a rag to cover him. Nature didn't give him a very symmetrical face, nor the sweetest of expressions, but he has a figure like a Greek statue. I was amused to see that both his eyes had a touch of shadow to them. It was his turn to grin when I sat up and found that my ear was about the shape and consistency of a toadstool. However, he was all for peace that morning, and chatted away in the most amiable manner possible.

I was to go back to my father's that day, but I had a couple of hours with Cullingworth in his consulting-room before I left. He was in his best form, and full of a hundred fantastic schemes by which I was to help him. His great object was to get his name into the newspapers. That was the basis of all success, according to his view. It seemed to me that he was confounding cause with effect, but I did not argue the point. I laughed until my sides ached over the grotesque suggestions which poured from him. I was to lie senseless in the roadway and to be carried in to him by a sympathising crowd; while the footman ran with a paragraph to the newspapers. But there was the likelihood that the crowd might carry me into the rival practitioner opposite. In various disguises I was to feign fits at his very door, and so furnish fresh copy for the local press. Then I was to die—absolutely to expire—and all Scotland was to ring with how Dr. Cullingworth, of Avonmouth, had resuscitated me. His ingenious brain rang a thousand changes out of the idea; and his own impending bankruptcy was crowded right out of his thoughts by the flood of half-serious devices.

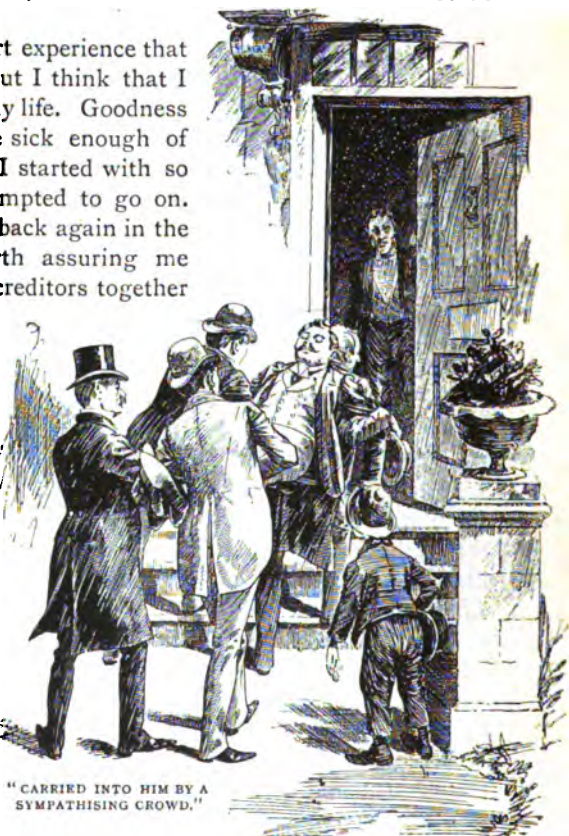
But the thing that took the fun out of him, and made him gnash his teeth and stride cursing about the room, was when he saw a patient walking up the steps which led to the door of Scarsdale, his opposite neighbour. Scarsdale had a fairly busy practice, and saw his people at home from ten to twelve, so that I got quite used to seeing Cullingworth fly out of his chair and rush raving to the window. He would diagnose the cases, too, and estimate their money value until he was hardly articulate.

"There you are!" he would suddenly yell. "See that man with a limp! Every morning he goes. Displaced semi-lunar cartilage, and a three months' job. The man's worth thirty-five shillings a week. And there! I'm hanged if the woman with the rheumatic arthritis isn't round in her bath-chair again. She's all sealskin and lactic acid. It's simply sickening to see how they crowd to that man. And such a man! You haven't seen

him. All the better for you. I don't know what the devil you are laughing at, Munro; I can't see where the fun comes in myself."

Well, it was a short experience that visit to Avonmouth, but I think that I shall remember it all my life. Goodness knows, you must be sick enough of the subject, but when I started with so much detail I was tempted to go on. It ended by my going back again in the afternoon, Cullingworth assuring me that he would call his creditors together as I had advised, and that he would let me know the result in a few days. Mrs. C. would hardly shake hands with me when I said good-bye, but I like her the better for that. He must have a great deal of good in him, else he could not have won her love and confidence so completely. Perhaps there is another Cullingworth behind the scenes, a softer tenderer man,

who can love and invite love. If there is, I have never got near him. And yet I may only have been tapping at the shell. Who knows? For that matter it is likely enough that he has never got at the real Johnnie Munro. But you have, Bertie, and I think that you've had a little too much of him this time, only you encourage me to this sort of excess by your sympathetic replies. Well, I've done as much as the General Post Office will carry for fivepence, so I'll conclude by merely remarking that a fortnight has passed, and that I have had no news from Avonmouth, which does not in the very slightest degree surprise me. If I ever do hear anything, which is exceedingly doubtful, you may be sure that I will put a finish to this long story.



"CARRIED INTO HIM BY A SYMPATHISING CROWD."

Two Stories.

BY CHARLES KENNETT BURROW.

ILLUSTRATION BY H. MARTIN BEAL.



Did love catch you unaware,
Hidden in an old world garden ;
Did he tune his voice to prayer,
Pleading, with wet eyes, for pardon ?

Sweet, he wooed your maiden glance
From a book to something better,
Closed one volume of romance,
And unsealed a lover's letter !



"HE GAVE A CALL!"

*The Gift of the Simple King.**

BY GILBERT PARKER.

ILLUSTRATED BY STANLEY L. WOOD.

ONCE Macavoy the giant ruled a tribe of Northern people, achieving the dignity chiefly by the hands of Pretty Pierre, who called him King Macavoy. Then came a time when, tiring of his kingship, he journeyed South, leaving all behind, even to his queen, who, in her royal bed of cypresses and yarrow, came forth no more into the morning. About Fort Guidon they still gave him his title, and because of his guilelessness, sincerity, and generosity, Pierre called him "The Simple King." His seven feet and over shambled about, suggesting unjointed power, unshackled force. No one hated Macavoy, many loved him, he was welcome at the fire and the cooking-pot; yet it seemed shameful to have so much man useless—such an engine of life, which might do great things, wasting fuel. Nobody thought much of that at Fort Guidon, except, perhaps, Pierre, who sometimes said, "My simple King, some day you shall have your great chance again, but not as a king; as a giant, a man."

The day did not come immediately, but it came.

When Ida, the deaf and dumb girl, married Hilton, of the H. B. C., every man at Fort Guidon, and some from posts beyond, sent her or brought her presents of one kind or another. Pierre's gift was a Mexican saddle. He was branding Ida's name on it with the broken blade of a case knife, when Macavoy entered on him, having just returned from a vagabond visit to Fort St. Anne.

"Is it diggin' out or carvin' in y'are, Pierre," he asked, puffing in his beard.

Pierre looked up contemptuously, but did not reply to the insinuation, for he never saw an insult unless he intended to avenge it; and quarrel with Macavoy—not he.

"What are you going to give?" he asked.

"Aw, give what to who, hop-o'-me-thumb?" Macavoy said, stretching himself out in the doorway, his legs in the sun, his head in the shade.

* This story is copyrighted by Mr. Gilbert Parker in America.

"You've been taking a walk in the country, then?" Pierre asked, though he knew.

"To Fort St. Anne; a buryin', two christ'nin's, an' a weddin'; an' lashins uv grog an' swill—aw that, me button o' the North!"

"Hey! hey! What a fool you are, my simple King! You've got the things end foremost. Turn your head to the open air, for I go to light a cigarette, and if you breathe this way, there will be a grand explode!"

"Aw, yer thumb in yer eye, Pierre! It's like a baby's, me breath is, milk and honey it is—aw yis; an' Father Corraine, that was doin' the trick for the love o' God, says he to me, 'Little Tim Macavoy'—aw yis, *little* Tim Macavoy,—says he, 'when are you goin' to buckle to, for the love of God!' says he. Ashamed I was, Pierre, that Father Corraine should spake to me like that, for I'd only a twig twisted at me hips to kape me trousies up, an' I thought 'twas that he had in his eye! 'Buckle to,' says I, 'Father Corraine? Buckle to, yer riv'rince!'—feelin' I was at the twigs the while. 'Ay, little Tim Macavoy,' he says, says he, 'you've been atin' the husks uv idleness long enough; when are you goin' to buckle to? You had a kingdom and ye guv it up,' says he; 'take a field, get a plough, and buckle to,' says he, 'an' turn back no more!'—like that, says Father Corraine; and I thinkin' all the time 'twas the want o' me belt he was drivin' at!"

Pierre looked at him a moment idly, then said: "Such a tom-fool! And where's that grand leather belt of yours, eh, my monarch?"

A laugh shook through Macavoy's beard. "For the weddin' it wint, buckled the two up wid it for better or worse—an' purty they looked, they did, standin' there in me cinch, an' one hole left—aw yis, Pierre!"

"And what do you give to Ida?" Pierre asked, with a little emphasis of the branding-iron.

Macavoy got to his feet. "Ida! Ida!" he said. "Is that saddle for her? Is it her and Hilton that's to ate aff one dish togither? That rose o' the valley, that bird wid a song in her face and none an her tongue! That daisy dot uv a thing, steppin' through the world like a sprig o' glory! Aw, Pierre, thim two! an' I've divil a scrap to give, good or bad. I've nothin' at all in the wide wurruld but the clothes on me back, an' thim hangin' on the underbrush!"—giving a little twist to

the twigs. "An' many a meal an' many a dipper o' drink she's guv me, little smiles dancin' at her lips."

He sat down in the doorway again, with his face turned towards Pierre, and the back of his head in the sun. He was a picture of perfect health, sumptuous, huge, a bull in beauty, and the heart of a child looking out of his eyes, but a sort of despair, too, in his bearing. Pierre watched him with a furtive humour for a time, then he said languidly: "Never mind your clothes, give yourself."

"Yer tongue in yer cheek, me spot o' vinegar. Give



"HE HELD IT UP."

meself! What's that for? A purty weddin' gift, say I! Handy thing to have in the house! Use me for a clothes-horse, or shtand me in the garden for a fairy bower!—aw yis, wid a hole in me face that'd ate thim out o' house and home!"

Pierre drew a piece of brown paper towards him, and wrote on it with a burnt match. Presently he held it up. "*Voilà*, my simple King, the thing for you to do: a grand gift, and to cost you nothing now. Come, read it out, and tell me what you think."

Macavoy took the paper, and in a large, judicial way, read slowly:

"On demand, for value received, I promise to pay to . . .
 IDA HILTON or order,
 meself, Tim Macavoy, standin' seven foot three on me bare fut,
 wid interest at nothin' at all."

Macavoy ended with a loud smack of the lips. "McGuire!" he said, and nothing more. *McGuire* was his strongest expression. In the most important moments of his career he had said it, and it sounded deep, strange, and more powerful than many usual oaths. A moment later he said again: "McGuire!" Then he read it once more out loud. "What's that, me Frenchman?" he said. "What Balzebub's tricks are y'at now?"

Pierre was complacently eyeing his handiwork on the saddle. He now settled back with his shoulders to the wall, and said: "*Dis donc*, it's a little promissory note, for a wedding gift to Ida. When she says, some day, 'Tim Macavoy, I want you to do this or that, or to go here or there, or to sell you or trade you, or use you for a clothes-horse, or a bridge over a cañon, or to hold up a house, or blow out a prairie-fire, or be my second husband,' you shall say, 'Here I am'; and you shall travel from Heaven to Halifax, but you shall come at the call of this promissory!"

Pierre's teeth glistened behind a smile as he spoke, and Macavoy broke into a roar of laughter. "Black's the white o' yer eye," he said at last, "an' a joke's a joke. Seven fut three I am, an' sound uv wind and limb—an' a weddin' gift to that swate rose o' the valley! Aisy, aisy, Pierre. A bit o' foolin' 'twas ye put on the paper, but truth I'll make it, me cock o' the walk! That's the gift I'll give her and Hilton, an' no other. An' a dab wid red wax it shall have, an' what more be the word o' Freddy Tarlton the lawyer."

"You're a great man, *beau gentilhomme*," said Pierre with a touch of gentle irony, for his natural malice had no play against the huge ex-King of his own making. With these big creatures—he had connived with several in his time—he had ever been superior, protective, making them to feel that they were as children beside him, and, in truth, he had in him the elements of a Napoleon. He looked at Macavoy musingly, and said to himself, "Well, why not? If it is a joke, then it is a joke; if it is a thing to make the world stand still for a minute sometime, so much the better. He is all waste now. By the holy, he shall do it. It is amusing, and it may be great by-and-by."

Presently Pierre said aloud: "Well, my Macavoy, what will you do? Send this good gift?"

"Aw yis, Pierre; I stand by that from the crown uv me head to the sole of me fut, surc. Face like a mornin' in May, and hands like the tunes of an organ, she has. Spakes wid a look uv her eye and a twist uv her purty lips an' swaying body, and talking to you widout a word. Aw motion—motion—motion; yis, that's it, that's it! An' I've seen her an tap uv a hill wid the wind blowin' her hair free, and the yellow buds on the tree, and the grass green beneath her feet, the sun smilin' betune her and the sun; pictures—pictures, aw yis! Promissory notice on demand is it any toime? Seven foot three on me bare fut. But, Holy Mother! when she calls I come, yis."

"On your oath, Macavoy?" asked Pierre, "by the book of the Mass?"

Macavoy stood up straight till his head scraped the cobwebs between the rafters, the wild indignation of a child in his eye. "D'ye think I'm a thafe to stale me own word? Hut, I'll break ye in two, ye wisp o' straw, if ye doubt me word to a lady. There's me note o' hand, and ye shall have me fist on it, in writing at Freddy Tarlton's office, wid a blotch uv red an' the queen's head at the bottom. *McGuire!*" he said again, and paused, puffing his lips through his beard.

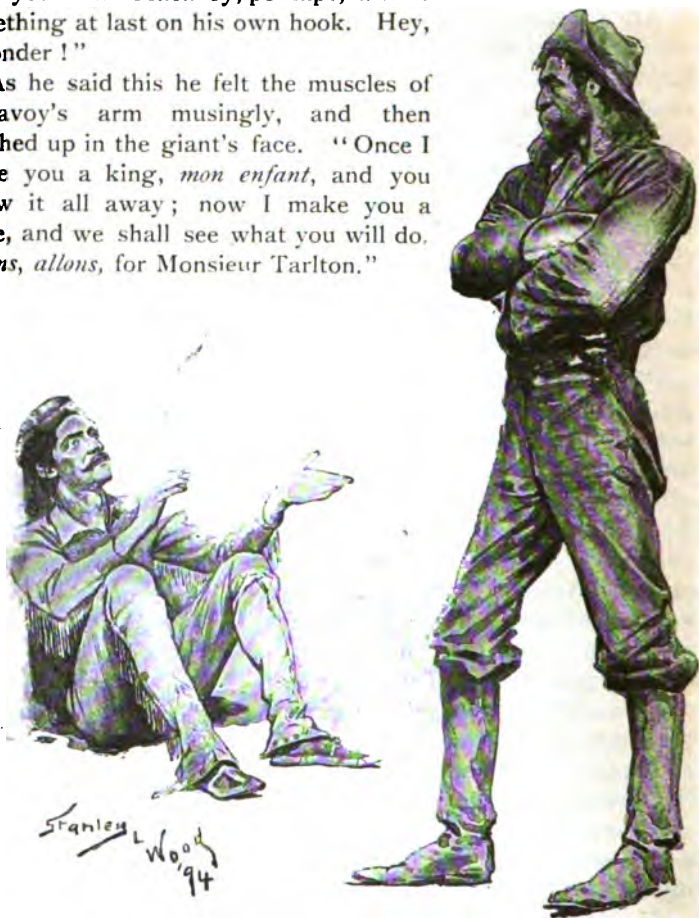
Pierre looked at him a moment, then waving his fingers idly, said, "So, my straw-breaker! Then to-morrow morning at ten you will fetch your wedding gift. But come so soon now to Monsieur Tarlton's office, and we will have it all as you say, with the red seal and the turn of your fist—yes. Well,



"THE WIND BLOWING HER HAIR FREE."

well, we travel far in the world, and sometimes we see strange things, and no two strange things are alike—no ; there is only one Macavoy in the world, there was only one Shon McGann. Shon McGann was a lovely fool, but he did something at last, truly yes : Tim Macavoy, perhaps, will do something at last on his own hook. Hey, I wonder !”

As he said this he felt the muscles of Macavoy's arm musingly, and then laughed up in the giant's face. “Once I made you a king, *mon enfant*, and you threw it all away ; now I make you a slave, and we shall see what you will do. *Allons, allons*, for Monsieur Tarlton.”



“SO, MY STRAW BREAKER !”

Macavoy dropped a heavy hand on Pierre's shoulder.

“’Tis hard to be a king, Pierre, but ’tis aisy to be a slave for the likes o’ her. I’d kiss her dirty shoe, sure.”

As they passed through the door, Pierre said, “*Dis donc*, perhaps, when all is done, she will sell you for old bones and

rag. Then I will buy you, and I will burn your bones and the rag, and I will scatter to the four winds of the earth the ashes of a king, a slave, a fool, and an Irishman,—truly !”

“Bedad, ye’ll have more earth in yer hands then, Pierre, than ye’ll ever earn, and more heaven than ye’ll ever shtand in.”

Half an hour later they were in Freddy Tarlton’s office on the banks of the Little Big Swan, which tumbled past, swelled by the first rain of the early autumn. Freddy Tarlton, who had a gift of humour, entered into the spirit of the thing, and treated it seriously, but in vain did he protest that the large red seal with Her Majesty’s head on it was unnecessary ; Macavoy insisted, and wrote his name across it with an indistinctness worthy of a king. Before the night was over everybody at Guidon Hill, save Hilton and Ida herself, knew what gift would come from Macavoy to the wedded pair.

The next morning was almost painfully beautiful, so delicate in its clearness, so exalted by the glory of the hills, so grand in the limitless stretch of the green brown prairie north and south. It was a day for God’s creatures to meet in, and speed away, and having flown round the boundaries of that spacious domain, to return again to the nest of home on the large plateau between the sea and the stars.

Gathered about Ida’s home was everybody who lived within a radius of a hundred miles. In the large front room all the presents were set :—rich furs from the far North, cunningly carved bowls, rocking chairs made by hand, knives, cooking utensils, a copy of Shakespeare in six volumes from the Protestant missionary who performed the ceremony, a nugget of gold from the Long Light River, and outside the door, a horse, Hilton’s own present to his wife, on which was put Pierre’s saddle with its silver mounting and Ida’s name branded deep on pommel and flap. When Macavoy arrived, a cheer went up which was carried on waves of laughter into the house to Hilton and Ida, who even then were standing before the missionary listening to the first words of the brief service which begins, “*I charge you both if you do know any just cause or impediment,*” and so on. But they did not turn to see what it was, for just at that moment they themselves were the most interesting people in the universe. Ida being deaf and dumb, it was necessary to interpret to her the words of the service by signs as the missionary read it, and this was done by Pierre himself, the half-breed Catholic, the man who had brought Hilton and Ida to-

gether, for he and Ida had been old friends. After Father Corrairie had taught her the language of signs, Pierre had learned them from her, until at last, his gestures had become as vital as her own, for the delicate precision of his every movement, the suggestiveness of look and motion were suited to a language which was nearer to the instincts of his own nature than word of mouth. All men did not trust Pierre, but all women did; with those he had a touch of Machiavelli, with these he had no sign of Mephistopheles, and few were the occasions in his life when he showed outward tenderness to either: which was equally effective. He had learnt, or knew by instinct, that exclusiveness as to men and indifference as to women are the greatest influences on both. As he stood there, slowly interpreting to Ida, by graceful allusive signs, the words of the service, one could not think that behind his impassive face there was any feeling for the man or for the woman; indeed, he had that disdainful smile which men acquire, who, like Pierre, are all their lives aloof from the hopes of the hearthstone and acknowledge no laws but their own. More than once the eyes of the girl filled with tears as the pregnancy of some phrase in the service came home to her, her face responded to Pierre's gestures, as do one's nerves to the delights of good music, and there was something so unique, so impressive in the ceremony, that the laughter which had greeted Macavoy passed away, and a dead silence, beginning from where the two stood, crept out until it covered all the prairie. Nothing was heard except Hilton's voice in strong tones saying, "I take thee to be my wedded wife," &c., but when the last words of the service were said, and the new-made bride turned to her husband's embrace, and a strange little moan of joy broke from her lips, there was plenty of noise and laughter again, for Macavoy stood in the doorway, or rather outside it, stooping to look in upon the scene. Someone had lent him the cinch of a broncho, and he had belted himself with it, no longer carrying his clothes about "on the underbrush." Hilton laughed and stretched out his hand. "Come in, King," he said, "come and wish us joy."

Macavoy parted the crowd easily, forcing his way, and instantly was stooping before the pair—for he could not stand upright in the room.

"Aw, now, Hilton, is it you, is it you, that's pluckin' the roses uv the valley, and snatchin' the stars out uv the sky! aw, Hilton, the like o' that! Travel down I did yesterday from

Fort St. Anne, and divil a word I knew till Pierre hit me in the eye wid it last night—and no time for a present, for a wedding gift—no, aw no !”

Just here Ida reached up and touched him on the shoulder. He smiled down on her, puffing and blowing in his beard, bursting to speak to her, yet knowing no word by signs to say ; but he nodded his head at her, and he patted Hilton's shoulder, and he took their hands and joined them together, hers on top of Hilton's, and shook them in one of his own till she almost winced. Presently, with a look at Hilton, who nodded in reply, Ida lifted her cheek to Macavoy to kiss—Macavoy, the idle, ill-cared for, boisterous giant. His face went red like that of a child caught in an awkward act, and with an absurd shyness he stooped and touched her cheek. Then he turned to Hilton, and blurted out, “Aw, the rose o' the valley, the pride o' the wide wurruld, aw the bloom o' the hills! I'd have kissed her dirty shoe. *McGuire!*”



“STOOPING TO LOOK IN.”

A burst of laughter rolled out on the clear delightful air of the prairie, and all at once the hills seemed to stir with the pleasure of life. Then it was that Macavoy, following Hilton and Ida outside, suddenly stopped beside the horse, drew from his pocket the promissory note that Pierre had written, and said, “Yis, but all the weddin' gifts aren't in. 'Tis nothin' I had to give, divil a cent in the wurruld, divil a pound uv baccy.

or a pot for the fire, or a bit uv linin for the table ; nothin' but meself and me dirty clothes, standin' seven fut three an me bare



"TOOK THEIR HANDS AND JOINED THEM TOGETHER."

fut. What was I to do? There was only meself to give, so I give it free and hearty, and here it is wid the Queen's head an it,

done in Mr. Tarlton's office. Ye'd better have had a dog, or a gun, or a ladder, or a horse, or a saddle, or a quart o' brown brandy ; but such as it is I give it ye—I give it to the rose o' the valley and the star o' the wide world."

And with that, in a loud voice, he read the promissory note, and handed it to Ida. Men laughed till there were tears in their eyes and a keg of whiskey was opened, but somehow Ida did not laugh. She and Pierre had seen a serious side to Macavoy's gift: the childlike manliness in it. It went home to her woman's heart without a touch of ludicrousness, without a sound of laughter.

II.

After a time the interest in this wedding gift declined at Fort Guidon, and but three people remembered it with any singular distinctness—Ida, Pierre, and Macavoy. Pierre was interested, for in his deep primitive mind, he knew that however wild a promise, life is so wild in its events, there comes the hour for redemption of all I.O.U.'s.

Meanwhile, weeks, months, and even a couple of years passed, Macavoy and Pierre coming and going, sometimes together, sometimes not, in all manner of words at war, in all manner of fact at peace. And Ida, out of the bounty of her nature, gave the two vagabonds a place at her fireside whenever they chose to come. Perhaps, where speech was not given, a gift of divination entered into her instead, and she valued what others found useless, and held aloof from what others found good. She had powers which had ever been the admiration of Guidon Hill. Birds and animals were her friends—she called them her kinsmen. A peculiar sympathy joined them ; so that when, at last, she tamed a white wild duck, and made it do the duties of a carrier-pigeon, no one thought it strange. Up in the hills, beside the White Sun River, lived her sister and her sister's children ; and, by-and-by, the white duck carried messages back and forth, so that when, in the winter, Ida's health became delicate, she had comfort in the solicitude and cheerfulness of her sister and the gaiety of the young birds of her nest, who sent Ida many a sprightly message and tales of their sweet vagrancy in the hills. In these days Pierre and Macavoy were little at the Post, save now and then to sit with Hilton beside the fire, waiting for spring and telling tales. Upon

Hilton had settled that peaceful, abstracted expectancy which shows man at his best, as he waits for the time when, through the half-lights of his fatherhood, he shall see the broad rich dawn of motherhood spreading up the world—which, all being said and done, is that place called Home. Something gentle came over him while he grew stouter in body, and in all other ways made a larger figure among the people of the West.

As Pierre, whose wisdom was more to be trusted than his general morality, said, "It is strange that most men think not enough of themselves till a woman shows them how. But it is the great wonder that the woman does not despise him for it. *Quel caractère!* She has so often to show him his way like a babe, and yet she says to him, *Mon grand homme!* my master! my lord! Pshaw! I have often thought that women are half saints, half fools, and men half fools, half rogues. But, *quelle vie!*—what life! without a woman you are half a man; with one you are bound to a single spot in the world, you are tied by the leg, your wing is clipped—you cannot have all. *Quelle vie!*"

To this Macavoy said: "Spit-spat! But what the devil good does all yer thinkin' do ye, Pierre! It's argufy here and argufy there, an' while yer at that me an' the rest uv us is squeezin' the fun out o' life, an' needin' no judge like you to tell us how. Aw, go 'long wid ye. Y'are only a bit o' hell and grammar, anyway. Wid all yer cuttin' and carvin' things to see the internals uv them, I'd do more to the call uv a woman's finger than for all the logic and knowalogy y' ever chewed—an' there y'are, me little tailor o' jur'sprudence!"

"To the finger-call of Hilton's wife, eh?"

Macavoy was not quite sure what Pierre's enigmatical tone meant. A wild light showed in his eyes, and his tongue blundered out: "Yis, Hilton's wife's finger, or a look uv her eye, or nothin' at all. Aisy, aisy, ye wasp! ye'd go stalkin' divils in hell for her yerself, so ye would. But the tongue uv ye—hut, it's gall to the tip!"

"Maybe, my king. But I'd go hunting because I wanted; you because you must. You're a slave to come and to go with a Queen's seal on the promissory."

Macavoy leaned back and roared. "Aw, that! The rose o' the valley! the joy o' the world! S't, Pierre—" his voice grew on a sudden softer, as a fresh thought came to him—"did ye ever think that the child might be dumb like the mother."

This was a day in the early spring, when the snows were

melting in the hills, and freshets were sweeping down the valleys far and near. That night a warm heavy rain came on, and in the morning every stream and river was swollen to twice its size. The mountains seemed to have stripped themselves of snow, and the vivid sun began at once to colour the foothills with green. As Pierre and Macavoy stood at their door, looking out upon the earth cleansing itself, Macavoy suddenly said : "Aw, look, look, Pierre ; her white duck off to the nest on Champak Hill !"

They both shaded their eyes with their hands. Circling round two or three times above the Post, the duck then stretched out its neck to the west and floated away beyond Guidon Hill, and was hid from view. Pierre without a word began cleaning his rifle, while Macavoy smoked and sat looking into the distance, surveying the sweet warmth and light. His face blossomed with colour, and the look of his eyes was that of an irresponsible child. Once or twice he smiled and puffed in his beard, but perhaps that was involuntary, or, maybe, a vague reflection of his dreams, themselves most vague, for he was only soaking in sun and air and life.

Within an hour they saw the wild duck again passing the crest of Guidon, and they watched it sailing down to the Post, Pierre idly fondling the gun, Macavoy half roused from his dreams. But presently they were altogether roused, the gun was put away, and both were on their feet ; for after the pigeon arrived there was a stir at the Post, and Hilton could be seen running from the store to his house, not far away.

"Something's wrong there," said Pierre.

"D'ye think 'twas the duck brought it ?" asked Macavoy.

Without a word Pierre started away towards the Post, Macavoy following. As they did so, a half-breed boy came from the house, hurrying towards them.

Inside the house Hilton's wife lay in her bed, her great hour coming on before the time, because of ill news from beyond the Guidon. There was with her an old Frenchwoman, who herself, in her time, had brought many children into the world, whose heart brooded tenderly, if uncouthly, over the dumb girl. She it was who had handed to Hilton the paper the wild duck had brought, after Ida had read it and fallen in a faint on the floor.

The message that had felled the young wife was brief and awful. A cloud-burst had fallen on Champak Hill, had torn

part of it away, and a part of this part had swept down into the path that led to the little house, having been stopped by some falling trees and a great boulder. It blocked the only way to escape above, and beneath the river was creeping up to sweep away the little house. So, there the mother and her children waited (the father was in the far north), facing death below and above. The wild duck had carried the tale in its terrible simplicity. The last words were, "There mayn't be any help from God or man for

me and my sweet chicks, but I am asking God, dear Ida, and you will send a man or many. But send soon, for we are cut off, and the end may come any hour."

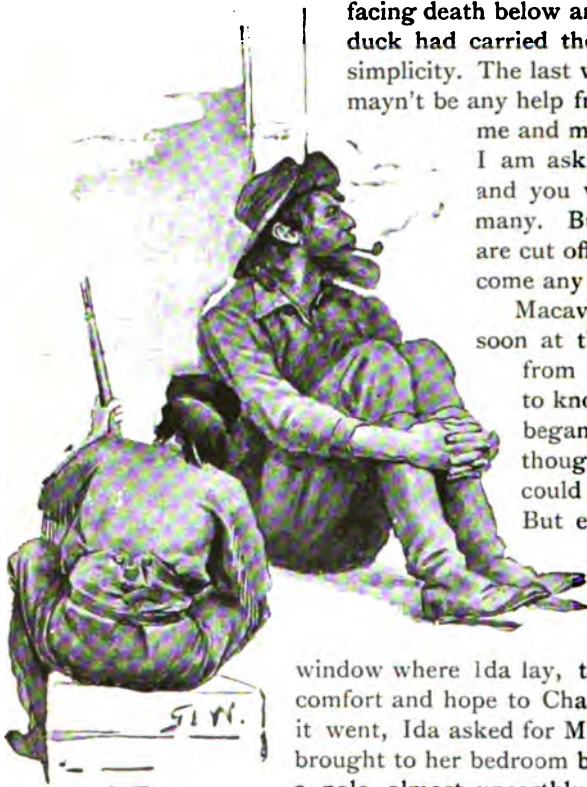
Macavoy and Pierre were soon at the Post, and knew from Hilton all there was to know. At once Pierre began to gather men, though what one or many could do none could say. But eight men and three

Indians watched the wild duck sailing away again from the bedroom

window where Ida lay, to carry a word of comfort and hope to Champak Hill. Before it went, Ida asked for Macavoy, and he was brought to her bedroom by Hilton. He saw a pale, almost unearthly, yet beautiful face, flushing and paling with a coming agony, looking up at him, and presently two trembling hands made those mystic signs which

"SMOKED AND SAT LOOK-
ING INTO THE DISTANCE."

are the primal language of the soul, learned before man knew speech, the first vocabulary. Hilton interpreted to him this: "I have sent for you. There is no man so big or strong as you in the North. I did not know that I should ever ask you to redeem the note. I want my gift, and I will give you your paper with the Queen's head on it. Those little lives,



those pretty little dears, you will not see them die. If there is a way, any way, you will save them. Sometimes one man can do what twenty cannot. You were my wedding-gift: I claim you now."

She paused, and then motioned to the nurse, who laid the piece of brown paper in Macavoy's hand. He held it for a moment in his fingers as delicately as if it were a fragile bit of glass, something that his



"HE WAS BROUGHT TO HER BEDROOM"

huge fingers might crush by touching. Then he reached over and laid it on the bed beside her and said, looking Hilton in the eyes, "Tell her, the slip uv a saint she is! if the breakin' uv me bones, or the lettin' uv me blood's what'll set all right at Champak Hill, let her mind be aisy—aw, yis!"

A minute afterwards they were all on their way—all save Hilton, whose duty was beside this other danger, for the old nurse said that, "like as not," her life would hang upon the news from Champak Hill; and if ill came, his place was beside the speechless traveller on the Brink.

In a few hours the rescuers stood on the top of Champak Hill, looking down. There stood the little house, as it were, between two dooms. Even Pierre's face became drawn and pale

as he saw what a very few hours or minutes might do. Macavoy had spoken no word, had answered no question since they had left the Post. There was in his eye the large seriousness, the intentness which might be found in the face of a brave boy, who had not learned fear, and yet saw a vast ditch of danger at which he must leap. There was ever before him the face of the dumb wife; there was in his ears the sound of pain that had followed him from Hilton's house out into the brilliant day.

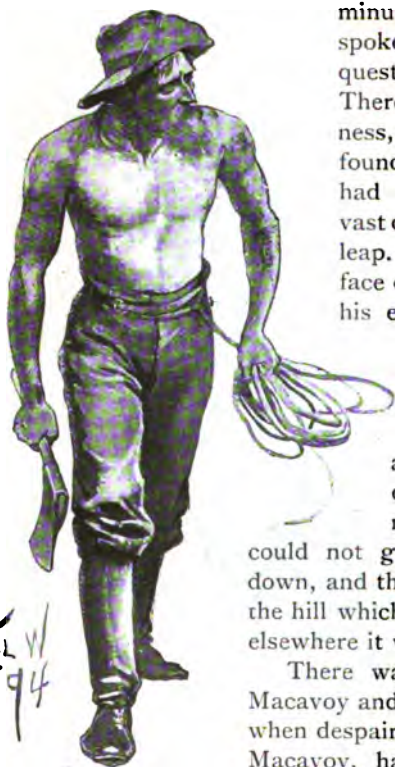
The men stood helpless, and looked at each other. They could not say to the river that it must rise no further, and they

could not go to the house nor let a rope down, and there was the crumbled moiety of the hill which blocked the way to the house; elsewhere it was sheer precipice without trees.

There was no corner in these hills that Macavoy and Pierre did not know, and at last, when despair seemed to settle on the group, Macavoy, having spoken a low word to Pierre, said: "There's wan way, and maybe I can an' maybe I can't, but I'm fit to try.

I'll go up the river to an aisy point a mile above, get in, and drift down to a p'int below there, then climb up and loose the stuff."

Every man present knew the double danger: the swift headlong river, and the sudden rush of rocks and stones, which must



"STARTED AWAY
ALONE."

be loosed on the side of the narrow ravine opposite the little house. Macavoy had nothing to say to the head-shakes of the others, and they did not try to dissuade him, for women and children were in the question, and there they were below beside the house, the children gathered round the mother, she waiting—waiting.

Macavoy, stripped to the waist, and carrying only a hatchet and a coil of rope tied round him, started away alone up the river. The others waited, now and again calling comfort to the woman below, though their words could not be heard. About half an hour passed, and then someone called out: "Here he comes!" Presently they could see the rough head and the bare shoulders of the giant in the wild churning stream. There was only one point where he could get a hold on the hillside—the jutting bole of a tree just beneath them, and the dyke of rock and trees.

It was a great moment. The current swayed him out, but he plunged forward, catching at the bole. His hand seized a small branch. It held him an instant, as he was swung round, then it snapt. But the other hand clenched the bole, and to a loud cheer, which Pierre prompted, Macavoy drew himself up. After that they could not see him. He alone was studying the situation. He found the key-rock to the dyked slide of earth. To loosen it was to divert the slide away, or partly away from the little house. But it could not be loosened from above, if at all, and he himself would be in the path of the destroying hill.

"Aisy, aisy, Tim Macavoy," he said to himself. "It's the woman and the darlins uv her, an' it's the rose o' the valley down there at the post!"

A minute afterwards, having chopped down a hickory sapling, he began to pry at the boulder, which held the mass. Presently a tree came crashing down, and a small rush of earth followed it, and the hearts of the men above and the women and children below stood still for an instant. But a half-hour passed as Macavoy toiled with a strange careful skill and a superhuman concentration. His body was all shining with sweat, and sweat dripped from his forehead. His eyes were on the key-rock and the pile, alert, measuring, intent. At last he paused. He looked round at the hills—down at the river, up at the sky—humanity was shut away from his sight. He was alone. A long hot breath broke from his pressed lips, stirring his big red beard. Then he gave a call, a long call

that echoed through the hills weirdly, and solemnly. Unconsciously there had come into it something of the wildness of those ancient clan-cries of Irish caves and hills.

It reached the ears of those above like a greeting from an outside world. They answered, "Right, Macavoy!"

Years afterwards these men told how then there came in reply one word, ringing roundly through the hills—the note and symbol of a crisis, the fantastic cipher of a soul—

"McGuire!"

Then there was a loud *booming* sound, the dyke was loosed, the ravine spilt into the swollen stream its choking mouthful of earth and rock, and a minute afterwards the path was clear to the top of Champak Hill. To it came the unharmed children and their mother, who, from the warm peak, sent the wild duck "to the rose o' the valley," which, till the message came, was trembling on the stem of life. But Joy, that marvellous healer, kept it blooming with a little Eden bird nestling near, whose happy tongue was taught in after years to tell of the gift of The Simple King: who had redeemed, on demand, the promissory note forever.



The Bookworm.

BY HENRY MARTIN BEAL.





"'I HOPE NOT,' SAID I."

Lucifera.

BY ANTHONY HOPE.

ILLUSTRATED BY HAL HURST.

“AND you have just settled in London?” she asked, with an interested air. “What a mental revelation!”

It had never struck me in that light before. I daresay that I looked a little uncomfortable.

“I have tried,” she continued, “to throw a little light on the darkness, to show a thread through the labyrinth. You remember that I attack some of the problems in *Lucifera*?”

I took no notice of this remark; to tell the truth I was wondering how she came to be so pretty. One does not associate prettiness and problems, somehow.

“You have read *Lucifera*?” she asked, in a sweet cooing voice, yet tinged with a certain insistence.

“I am glad to say I have not,” I returned, looking her in the face—which is, I take it, only good manners when one is conversing.

“Glad!” she cried, clasping her hands in becoming horror. “What a rude thing to say, Mr. Vansittart!”

“It will be much pleasanter to hear about it from you.”

She seemed to take this quite seriously.

“Yes, the personality counts,” she observed, nodding her head—a head covered (if I may mention it) with the most delightful gleaming brown hair.

“I should rather think it did,” I answered; and then looking round the conservatory, I added, “There’s no one to interrupt. Fire away, Mrs. Knight.”



“GLAD!” SHE CRIED.

"Oh, but it's so difficult to explain—at least, unless the listener is sympathetic."

"I'm uncommonly sympathetic, Mrs. Knight," I assured her; and indeed I felt so. I don't believe she was thirty—upon my word I don't.

"My *gospel*," said she, with a pretty, modest, deprecating smile for the big word, "is perfect naturalness."

"I see," said I. As a matter of fact, I did not see anything except a remarkably taking mouth and chin.

"If you feel sad, be sad; if merry, be merry. What is conventionality, Mr. Vansittart, except a stifling of nature?"

"It's nothing else in the world," I agreed.

"Ah, you men," Mrs. Knight went on, with a swing of her fan through the air. "You men don't know what the deadening weight of it is. It is we women who have to bear the burden of it. We are trammelled and tied at every step."

"It's a burning shame," said I. "Why do you stand it?"

"Well, I have lifted up my voice," said Mrs. Knight. "I have claimed the right for myself and my sisters to do what our feelings—our feelings, which are nature's guide—tell us; as I say in *Lucifera*, through my heroine's lips."

"Oh, say it through your own," I implored.

"I really do believe that you understand what I mean!" cried Mrs. Knight, in rapture.

"I feel quite sure that I do," said I.

"Ah, sometimes, now and then, when I am alone with somebody who appreciates what I feel, I *can* speak out—yes, and through my own lips. You are not yet spoilt by the world, Mr. Vansittart."

"I hope not," said I, leaning my arm on the back of the settee, and regarding Mrs. Knight's right ear. I have a liking for a pretty ear.

"Why are my likes and my dislikes to be mapped out for me by leaden rules? Why are 'you must,' and 'you must not,' to meet me at every turn? If I like a—"

"Yes—if you like a man?" I suggested.

"Well, yes—then—a man—" said she, accepting the suggestion with conscious audacity. "If I like a man, why may I not tell him so?"

"And if he likes you," I added, "why in the world should he not mention the fact?"

"If it gives me pleasure to talk to him—"



"I—I THOUGHT . . . THAT IT WAS TIME WE WENT BACK TO THE OTHER ROOM!"

"And it gives him pleasure to look at you—"

Mrs. Knight suddenly looked down on the floor.

"It's all in *Lucifera*, you know," said she.

"It would be a pity to let it stay there," said I.

"I've been trying to explain to you what my heroine thought."

"I have been extremely interested," I remarked, politely.

"Of course, in real life," said Mrs. Knight, opening her fan and shutting it slowly again with a caressing pressure of her

hand, "we cannot move so quickly. The ground must be prepared beforehand."

"One must, of course, choose the opportunity," I conceded, with a glance round the empty conservatory.

"Take my own case—" she began.

"It is the best of all to take," I cried.

"Well, or take yours," she amended.

"It comes to just the same thing," said I.

"We must be careful, you know. If we are to preach the gospel, we must not throw away our influence by any indiscretion."

"It would be most unwise," said I, with another look round.

"We should but rivet the chains closer," she urged, earnestly.

"That is very true—in a sense," said I.

"In every sense," urged Mrs. Knight.

"In more than would be wise," I admitted.

"Yet," said she, "we can progress little by little, and every step forward is something gained," and her eyes sparkled with enthusiasm. Perhaps mine were sparkling, too—also with enthusiasm.

"Every step forward," I repeated with conviction, "is a great deal gained."

"*Lucifera* did something," said Mrs. Knight.

"Ah, now, what did she do?" I asked, much interested.

"I mean the book had some effect."

"Oh, I beg your pardon—of course, of course."

"But we want something more."

"Yes, we do," said I.

"What precisely it is," said Mrs. Knight, knitting her arched brows, "I am not quite sure. What *is* the next thing to be done, Mr. Vansittart?"

"To put in action," said I, firmly and without a moment's hesitation, "the gospel which you have so nobly preached in *Bluesifera*."

"Forgive me—*Lucifera*, Mr. Vansittart."

"Yes, yes—*Lucifera*. I said *Lucifera*, didn't I? At any rate, I meant—I say, what are you getting up for, Mrs. Knight?"

"I—I thought," said Mrs. Knight, with a sudden and most unexpected timidity, "that it was time we went back to the other room."

"Do you *want* to go back to the other room, Mrs. Knight?"

"Oh, well, no, Mr. Vansittart. I didn't exactly *want* to go. I'm sure I've enjoyed our talk very much. But don't you think that perhaps we *ought*——"

"Ought!" I echoed, scornfully. "Where is the 'ought' when we neither of us want it?"

Mrs. Knight stood opposite me for a moment, her folded fan dangling from her hand. She smiled doubtfully at me. I rose to my feet—it is rude to sit while a lady stands—and took hold of the other end of the fan. The fan was quite a small one.

"What, under the circumstances," said I, reiterating the gist of my question, "is the meaning of 'ought'?"

"Oh, the meaning of 'ought'?" murmured Mrs. Knight.

"What is my 'ought' and what is your 'ought'? What is it, I say? And where is it?"

A smile appeared on Mrs. Knight's face.

"Well, if you ask me, Mr. Vansittart," said she, throwing her lashes up for an instant and letting them droop swiftly again; "I think my 'Ought' is probably looking for me and wondering who I'm sitting out with all this time. At least, that's what he's generally doing at a dance."

"Now, if he would read *Lucifera*!" said I.

"He approves of it—in theory," said Mrs. Knight. "Ah, you're very hap—I mean—I mean you haven't got an 'Ought,' Mr. Vansittart."

"Oh, yes, I have," said I, nodding.

"What ——? Oh, but you're too young! You're, surely, not ——?"

"Converted?" I interrupted. "Certainly."

"Oh, converted!" murmured Mrs. Knight with a smile.

"And so," said I, "I have found an 'ought.' Shall I tell you what it is?"

"Yes, please do, Mr. Vansittart."

It was the shortest explanation which I have ever achieved, when one considers, I mean, how absolutely complete it was. It left nothing more to say, unless it were a single syllable, which Mrs. Knight said.

"Oh!" said Mrs. Knight.

"Do you quite understand—or shall I repeat?"

"No," said Mrs. Knight.

At this moment a tall, stout, middle-aged man with black

whiskers entered the room and, seeing us, cried in unmistakable satisfaction, "Ah!" and advanced towards us, saying as he came:

"I could not think what had become of you, my dear! I've been looking everywhere!"

"Why, my dear, I've been here all the time," said Mrs.



"PLEASE DO, MR. VANSITTART."

Knight. "Mr. Vansittart—do let me introduce my husband to you, Mr. Vansittart—and I have been talking about *Lucifera*. I have been trying to tell him what I meant."

"It is a great book, sir," said the man with whiskers.

"As Mrs. Knight explains it," said I, "it is superb."

"I trust," said he, "that you agree with its position?"

"I have just explained that I do," said I.

Mrs. Knight took his arm and bowed to me. I bowed to Mrs. Knight.

"We shall meet again soon, I hope," said she, "and exchange more——"

"Opinions," said I, for what's in a name, after all?

Next morning I perceived that the thing ought never to have happened. But since it had—oh, well!



"WE SHALL MEET AGAIN SOON, I HOPE," SAID SHE."

Sairey Gamp Up to Date.

BY GEO. B. BURGIN.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY SYDNEY COWELL.

WE will suppose you are two or three and twenty, and feel dissatisfied with the dulness of home. Your father is paralysed, your mother a hopeless invalid, and you have made up your mind to go out into the world and become a nurse. Very well, I'll tell you something about the way to do so, only let me



OLD STYLE.

warn you that out of every twelve girls who obtain admission to a hospital as nurses, ten go away at the end of the first fortnight disgusted with the life. They have read about the nurse of fiction, and think that all they have to do is to wear becoming clothes and nurse nice-looking young men who have broken an arm or leg in order to be tended by a beautiful woman with Madonna-like eyes and a pretty uniform. When they come to the realities of nursing, such, for instance, as washing a patient who has long had conscientious scruples against the use of soap, and other little trifles of that sort, they don't like the work. Scrubbing floors also becomes monotonous, but I don't fancy that is done by nurses in London hospitals now. It used to be. And a nurse is comparatively valueless unless she possesses

great tact. I once knew a nurse, in a small seaside hospital, who, from sheer amiability, always yielded to her patients instead of dissuading them from committing absurdities. She agreed with a sailor who was recovering from typhoid that it was a monstrous piece of wickedness not to give him more food, although in his then state it would have killed him at once. When the nurse went to sleep, the sailor made a rope of his bedclothes and let himself down into an area communicating with the larder.

There was a fine leg of mutton just out of his reach (fortunately for him), and he hadn't the moral resolution to leave the mutton or the physical strength to climb up his rope. He was carried back to bed in the morning, and told me that in after years the very sight of sheep produced a feeling of loathing and indescribable nausea. Any ordinary patient would have died from exposure.

As a preliminary step, get a letter of introduction from your family doctor to the matron of a big London hospital. If you can't get a letter of introduction, write to the matron, saying you wish to become a nurse, and ask for an appointment to see her. You'll find that she will be inquisitive as to your age, but not more so than any other woman usually is, and want to know if you can pass a physical examination, as all nurses must be thoroughly sound. She will also read over the hospital rules to you, and write to your friends for references. Your friends (if they are worth anything) will unblushingly declare that you have all the necessary qualifications, and are a Florence Nightingale in embryo. When the hospital authorities have acceded to your application, your relatives will also make you utterly useless presents in the shape of stethoscopes and second-hand surgical implements as they weepingly bid you farewell, under the impression that you have given up the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and are going to certain death.



NEW STYLE.

In most hospitals, the first year's salary varies from £10 to £18—some, however, only pay £10; for the second and third year, an average nurse is paid from £18 to £20. Every six months you will have new dresses, aprons, &c., and an array of deadly implements depending from a leather belt. The latter are always strikingly effective when you call on old friends, and are much admired by what Sidney Smith calls "the inferior orders of the clergy." The usual routine for a probationer, as a nurse is termed in her first year, is to rise at 6.30, prayers 7.35, duty from 8 to 12, dinner at 12, duty from 12.30 to 4.30, supper at 8.30, prayers 9.45,

then bed. Roughly speaking (I am only giving you vague details), you will be on duty some 14 hours every day.*

Your first duty as a probationer will be to clean "the brights," viz., inkstands, lamps, and metal things such as spatulas, &c. The house surgeon resides in the hospital, and is responsible for the proper carrying out of all details of the work. He has so many "dressers" to assist him with his cases. After breakfast, he starts off through the ward with his students. The sister follows the house surgeon, carrying the pen and ink and towels.



MOVING AN ACCIDENT CASE.

From a photograph by Messrs. Boning and Small

You follow the staff nurse, who is in attendance on the sister. Then, as you go to the different beds, the house surgeon asks the sister for the night report. During this time, you and the nurse should not utter a word unless complications arise. A model nurse is one who says absolutely nothing to the doctor when he enters the ward unless he first speaks to her. The house surgeon sees the patient, prescribes certain medicines, and his directions are written on a board which is hung over the bed.

* The ordinary staff for a ward (a surgical ward usually contains about 26 patients) consists of two probationers, one staff nurse, one lady pupil (a lady pupil is one who pays so much a week for the privilege of being trained in the hospital), and one sister in command. The sister wears a different uniform from the others.

This is done in every case. At twelve, it is probably dinner time. The sister makes out a list of the patients, and of the necessary food, which is then sent up to the lobby in bulk, and you help the nurses to cut it up for their respective patients. At some hospitals there are also special wards, such as those for Jews, where the patients' meals are all cooked after the Jewish manner. When a Jewish patient is dying, the Jewish watchers are sent for. Jews strongly object to *post-mortems*, and don't take the slightest interest in pathological questions. It is well known a sheep's kidney strongly resembles that of a human being. A Jew having died of kidney disease in a certain hospital, it was found almost impossible to obtain the kidney for dissection owing to the rooted belief of the Jews that if a man's whole body is not buried his spirit cannot inherit salvation. A keen watch therefore is always kept by his countrymen over the body of a Jew who dies in hospital. The desire to benefit his fellow-creatures by the accurate study of this particular disease induced a well-known doctor to substitute a sheep's kidney for the human one, and, strange to say, the fraud was never detected.

Early in the afternoon, everything is prepared for the visit of the consulting surgeon, who generally attends two days a week. The same routine is observed as in the morning, with the addition of the house surgeon's presence. Dressers belonging to other surgeons in the hospital also come round the ward. A popular man or good teacher will often be accompanied by seventy or eighty students. In the next ward, an unpopular surgeon who is a bad teacher will probably only have half-a-dozen. The consulting surgeon gives instructions to the house surgeon, who passes them on to the sister, and she is responsible for the nurses carrying them out properly. If anything goes wrong, the sister alone is blamed. After the surgeon has gone, the nurses who have a couple of hours off duty, get on the top of a 'bus and ride to Hyde Park and back for the sake of the fresh air.

In your second year, you will have three months' night and day work alternately; and, if you are staff nurse, will be responsible for everything done to the patients under the sister's direction. Your alternate afternoons or evenings will be spent off duty. After dinner, you will probably have to prepare patients for operations, and get the operating table or theatre ready. The operations in the children's wards at large hospitals used to be something perfectly heart-rending. I believe the whole system has been changed now, but at one time, when an operation was about to be

performed on a child, it was taken from its cot, stripped, and carried to the operating table (the table was surrounded by a screen) in the middle of the ward, where its screams could be heard by all the other children before it yielded to the influence of the chloroform. Just imagine the other children listening, with beating hearts, their faces white with terror, and yet unable to escape from it all. The whole system was a disgrace to civilisation.

In every hospital there are night sisters—perhaps two or three—whose duty it is to go through the wards, see that the nurses are awake, and also to enforce the carrying out of instructions. They, practically, superintend the whole of the nurses on night

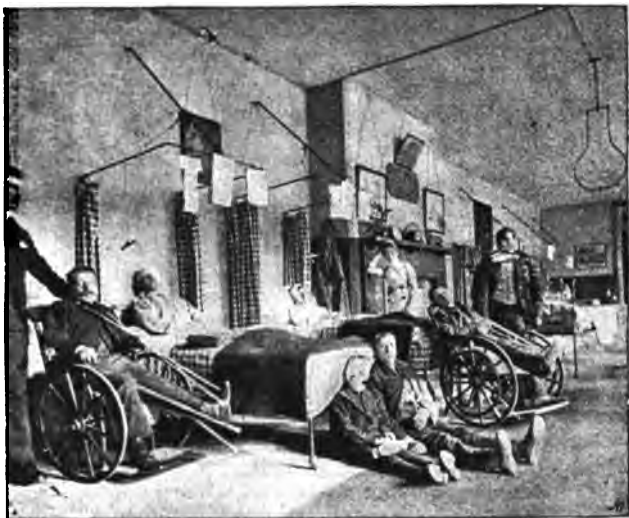


THE RECEIVING ROOM.—EXAMINING A NEW PATIENT.
(From a photograph by Messrs. Boning and Small.

duty. I once overheard the following pathetic dialogue between a night nurse and a patient who had just recovered consciousness:—
“Did I—did I swear *very* much?” he whispered faintly to the nurse. “We-ell,” she said; “not more than they *usually* do. There was a slight tinge of profanity about some of your remarks (he had been swearing frightfully), but you invariably corrected yourself.” “Ah,” he said, as he dozed peacefully off, “I always thought I was a gentleman. Now, I’m sure of it.” Before the night nurse goes to bed, she writes a detailed account of what has happened during the night, and hands this report to the ward sister, who is generally known by the name of the ward in which she is stationed. At the London Hospital, for instance, there is “Sister Rothschild”; the Queen’s has “Sister Queen,” “Sister Currie,” and so on.

At the receiving room, all cases are first seen and reported on. Sometimes, a man is brought in who proves to be dead drunk. He is given a cold water douche or a slight galvanic shock. A good way to sober a man is to get a heavy sponge full of water,

and squeeze it into his nostrils. There is a chronic case at one hospital who has been revived several times in this way, although he always swears frightfully afterward. When he begins to swear, it is understood that the gates of memory are re-opening, and that he knows where he is. A nurse in the receiving room once told me of an old woman who applied for admission to her hospital on the ground that she had a bad leg. There was really nothing the matter with the old woman's leg at all, except that it wanted a bath very badly. The doctor did not like to hurt the old woman's feelings, and so gravely informed her, "This leg must be fomented at once, or I'll not answer for the consequences. Go home as fast as you can, take a gallon of warm water, and dissolve half-a-pound of soft soap in it. When you have done that, get a scrubbing-brush, immerse the leg, and scrub for twenty minutes. Dry with a soft towel, and put on a clean stocking." The old woman faithfully carried out his instructions, only to return the next day wearing *one* clean stocking. On another occasion, just as the doctor had finished attending to an elderly woman whose face was a mass of scratches, a second old female was brought in very much battered about the nose. "What's the matter with you, my good woman?" asked the doctor. "Lor' bless your innocent 'eart, sir, I fell down agin the kerb——" Then she broke off as her eyes fell upon the first old woman. "Why," she shrieked, in a transport of fury, "*there's the lady wot did it!*" and made a violent rush at old woman number one.



ACCIDENT WARD.
(From a photograph by Messrs. Boning and Small.)

The third year's routine is much the same as the second. Of course, if you are not a good nurse, you can be sent away, but if

you have done your duty properly at the end of three years, you can stay on indefinitely. When off duty, you are perfectly free to do as you like, but you are seldom off for longer than three and a half hours at a time, except once a month, when you have half a day. No Bank Holidays, of course. There is very little social relaxation, except an occasional concert in the committee room. The nurses' meals are all taken together in the dining hall. Every evening the chapel bell rings at 9.45, and prayers last for a quarter of an hour. Then roll call, and you retire to your "cubicle," which is partitioned off from the next with a hanging curtain for door, and is generally furnished with bed, chair, wash-hand stand, wardrobe, chest of drawers, and carpet.



OPERATING THEATRE.
(From a photograph by Messrs. Boning and Small.)

dissecting cases are ranged round the walls to the height of ordinary bookcases, which they somewhat resemble. Inside the cases are large bottles containing "specimens," steeped in spirits of wine. One shelf will be devoted to hands, another to feet, another to arms, or gruesome and unnatural distortions of the human form divine at all ages. You can imagine the effect of these cases on a sensitive girl. She generally goes into hysterics. On one occasion, when the students of a well-known hospital gave a

At Christmas, the doctors and nurses sometimes try to amuse the patients who are well enough to sit up and listen to songs and recitations. I have heard of students giving a dance to nurses in the dissecting room of a well-known hospital. Of course, you've never been in a dissecting room.* If you ever do enter one, you will probably faint. The

* The dissecting room is so horrible a sight that the nurses are not supposed to enter it at all. Even the students become sick at first, and some of them cannot face it a second time. Others, on the contrary, may be seen cutting up a specimen and their lunch simultaneously. It is wonderful that they don't mix things sometimes.

ball to the nurses, they carefully draped the dissecting cases, so that their hideous contents remained unseen. In the midst of the dance, the electric light went out. Some thoughtless student pulled away the drapery from the dissecting cases, and when the light was again switched on, the ladies suddenly found themselves surrounded by the ghastly collection of horrors which had been so carefully hidden from their view. Many of them fainted, one or two were seriously ill, and the dance came to an untimely end.

I should say that, take it all in all, five per cent. of the nurses in a hospital marry students. And, again, it is a common thing



PATIENTS IN THE GARDEN.
(From a photograph by Messrs. Boning and Small.)

for sisters to marry either house surgeons or physicians. When the consulting surgeon has paid his visit there is sometimes an adjournment for afternoon tea to the private room which the sister has in the ward itself. In most hospitals, too, there is a garden at the back, where nurses who are about to go on duty promenade for a few minutes in their fresh costumes, casting perhaps, here and there, a glance at some favoured but distant student.

You mustn't think a nurse's life is all gloom. The following incident happened in the children's ward of a well-known hospital,

where a disreputable old tabby Tom had established himself. How he came there was a mystery. Thomas Henry (that was his name) possessed perfect manners in the daytime. He seemed to yearn to have his tail pulled as he passed from cot to cot ; and when one little pale-faced street arab (spinal complaint—hopeless) rubbed his fur the wrong way, Thomas Henry almost asked him to do it again. But this was in the daytime. Towards night, Thomas Henry grew absent-minded, and marched to the door as if he had an appointment which must be kept. He returned one morning, a moral and physical wreck, with his left eye hanging out and a hind leg broken. To please the children they



IN THE CHILDREN'S WARD.
(From a photograph by Messrs. Boning and Small.)

bandaged Thomas Henry, put him in a cot, hung up a temperature chart on the wall, and when the doctor came round he was introduced with great ceremony to his disreputable patient. The children were so delighted with this performance that it was repeated day by day. It was quite touching to see Thomas Henry with one eye bandaged up, and the other cautiously surveying the doctor. In a week, he was able to crawl about the ward on three legs, but was never the same cat again. He renounced all outside engagements, slept in the ward, and always went to evening

prayers. He is still alive, a saintly, good old cat who has never heard of tiles, and who will ultimately be stuffed and occupy a glass case in the ward when his days are numbered.

A nurse once told me that a well-known singer with a beautiful voice would sometimes come on Sunday afternoons to sing to some of the patients in her ward. She was much puzzled one afternoon by being asked to sing, "That beautiful hymn, mum, sweet Zululand." Of course, it was "Sweet Beulah-land."

As to the openings for nurses who get on well, there are many. A successful nurse is often attached to special departments for the eye or ear, &c. A consulting surgeon, too, will take a nurse and place her in charge of a home where he keeps his private patients. Many nurses also go into nursing institutions at large salaries.

With regard to the social side of hospital life, you'll find nurses, as a rule, very cliquey. Of course, you get all sorts and conditions of girls, from deans' daughters to dairymaids. Still, each girl generally has a strong feeling of pride in her own hospital, and many girls become love of their profession. is nothing grander than You will want a good when you first witness arity with pain often ence to it. The life of any amount of hard afraid of work sights had better an accident ward. most hospitals is good nurse takes helping to pull case. You will somewhat pain- will learn to love away for your want to get back again.



MRS. ELIZABETH FRY, THE PIONEER OF
"THE NURSING MOVEMENT."

nurses through sheer They think that there the life of a nurse. deal of nerve, though, an operation. Famili-breeds a certain indiffer-a nurse, too, involves work. Girls who are and unpleasant stay away from The discipline in very strict, but a great pride in through a difficult find the life a ful one, but you it, and even when annual fortnight

At last comes the crowning glory of a certificate, and you walk forth triumphantly waving it in your hand. Your life when you undertake private nursing will become more interesting—indeed, it will sometimes be exciting and dramatic. I once knew a nurse who——. But that's another article!



"THEN SHE GOT UP!"

An Interval.

BY E. S. GREW.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY T. S. C. CROWTHER.

“**L**OOK here, don't you whack him so much !” I said.

The trap door of the hansom roof slammed down, and the whip went on swishing. I shoved the trap-door up again angrily.

“Beg y'r pardon, sir?” said the voice from above, in tones of sympathetic inquiry.

“Well, what are you whacking him for—he's doing his best?”

The trapdoor slammed, and in a moment or two went up again.

“Beg pardon, sir?” continued the voice. “It aint a 'im, it's a 'er.”

A passing hansom sent a splash on to my shirt front. “See here,” said I, thoroughly roused, “if you hit him again, I'll take your number.”

“She ain't a—”

“Well,” I continued fiercely, “what the deuce has that got to do with it? The horse is going all right. Don't you whack him any more.”

Again the trapdoor slammed, and again went up. “Beg y'r pardon, sir,” the voice resumed, “but she's a very peculiar little 'orse. If I don't 'it 'er she'll go right on and stop. She won't go unless she's urged.”

I made no response, and the whip stopped. The “peculiar little 'orse” shook her head, and ambled along more and more



“SEE HERE,” SAID I, THOROUGHLY ROUSED.”

slowly. Presently she stopped. I thought I heard the trap-door go up, but I took no notice, and after a decent interval, we moved placidly on again. We seldom increased our pace beyond a walk during the remainder of our journey. Once or twice the drivers of passing hansoms, who seemed to know my cabman, raised their hats as they went by. I have since discovered that this is a humorous intimation of respect to a cab whose progress resembles that of a funeral procession. On one of these occasions I heard my cabman respond, "Orl right. Orl right. Don't you worry *yourself*. It's a dy's job." I said nothing to the cabman as I paid him, when we arrived at Paddington, but the little horse turned round to look at us. She had melancholy legs and a very Roman nose. We looked at one another.

"'Er naime's Jess," remarked the cabman.

Jess winked one ear.

"She's a listenin'," he commented. "Don't you go and think as she doesn't know a bit. Come up, Jess, you old cow!" and off he drove, while I hurried inside the station to find that the next train to Henley would start in an hour and five minutes.

I did not think, I scarcely hoped, to meet Jess again, though I trusted I should recognise her if I encountered her when I was in a hurry to catch a train. In this trust I was justified. It was some months afterwards, when I was walking along one of the dingy streets at the back of Trafalgar Square. An October shower had made the asphalt as slippery as glass for the horses, and it was with some return of my old indignation that I saw a hansom coming along the street furiously driven. The driver was standing up in his seat to lay it on with more science, and as he passed the St. Martin's Cab Shelter, he was greeted by a chorus from his colleagues of "Sit dahn to it, buoy! *Sit* dahn. Fight 'er fair! Fight 'er fair!" There was no mistaking that Roman profile, those melancholy legs. It was Jess. The cab had only travelled a few paces beyond the shelter, when the horse slipped and stumbled. Jess slid a little distance along on her hind legs, made a frantic effort to recover herself, and then came down heavily. The driver climbed down from his perch with an expedition which surprised me. I had thought he would have endeavoured to get the mare up by the customary persuasion of the whip. Perhaps the cab rank knew better, for they drew round and helped the driver to strip off the harness

and wheel back the cab, with no other remark than "Woa mare! woa beauty!" At length all the harness was taken off, with the exception of the headstall, and Jess, looking strangely *décolletée* and forlorn in this attire, made the effort which was clearly expected of her to regain her footing. In



"CAME DOWN HEAVILY."

vain. She tried a second time, while the small crowd, which customarily collects on these occasions, cleared a little farther back; but again the asphalt slipped away from her, and she came down again in a despondent heap. A lady in the crowd, who had come out without her bonnet, and with a baby, said

that "It was a shime—that's wot it was, workin' a poor 'orse like that, and she would like to know what the Serciety for the Purvention of Croolty to Animals was a-doin' of; that's what she should like to know. Shut 'er jor? (continued the lady with the baby). Yus! ho yus! wot, for 'im? A nasty brute like 'im, wot flogs a pore animal till 'e carn't stand up on the ashfelt? Shut 'er jor, indeed! For 'im?"

A youthful policeman came up briskly, and took out his note-book. "Here, stand away! stand away!" he said, smartly. "Now then, driver, why don't you get the 'orse up?"

The driver made no immediate response, though he told the hanger-on of the cab rank, who came up at this moment with a pail of water, that he might bloomin' well strike him pink. The pail was placed on the ground, and a glass borrowed from the public-house opposite. Jess looked at these preparations with a faint curiosity, but their application was by no means to her taste. Her driver dipped a glass of water out of the pail, and flung it sharply at the side of her face. Jess shook her head irritably, but the water did not help her to get up. Presently one of the glasses of water missed her altogether, for she rolled over suddenly—on the pail.

"That's a fat lot o' good," observed the smart young policeman. "Why don't you get some gravel to put under her feet?"

This was a revelation of intelligence on the part of the constable which was clearly unexpected by the cabmen, and their respect for him went up visibly. Some cinders were got and placed under Jess's feet, and the group drew back again to leave a space clear for her effort. She made none.

"Put some under 'er 'ind' legs," said one of the four-wheelers. "She'd be orl right if you got 'er up on 'er 'ind-end."

They put some cinders underneath her hind hoofs, and Jess floundered hard in the effort her friends looked for. But her legs doubled up suddenly once more, and she came down as hopelessly as ever, and another of the draggle-tailed women in the crowd said that they "Starved the pore beasts, and overworked 'em, and overworked 'em, until they *couldn't* get up. Look at the pore beast's ribs!"

Jess was getting weaker, and sometimes her eyes closed. A bystander suggested that they should prop her up with something to support her—prop her up with some straw. It was done, and thereafter Jess appeared to resign all responsibility for the situation. She made no further attempts to get up, and

her head sank down on the straw. A stray dog wandered up and smelt inquiringly at her hoofs.

"Ah," said one of the tender-hearted women, "see 'ow the pore dumb animals feel for one another. They know when one another's in trouble."

Jess's hind hoof stirred nervously, and one of the poor animals went howling down the street towards the Nelson Column.

"Why don't you pull her fore legs out?" asked the policeman.

They pulled her fore legs out, and she left them there; and in this position she reminded one distantly of the Blondin Donkey.

"Come, Jess," said her driver, expostulatingly. "Come up, love! You ain't bought a bit o' free'old, you know."

"I know what she's a waitin' for," said the man in a frock coat and bowler hat, who had brought the pail; "she's a waitin' to have her bloomin' portrite taken."

They tried everything. The policeman moved the crowd further back, and cuffed an errand boy's head.

They tried to lever her up. They tried to pull her up, four of them, with a strap round her neck, and one of them hauling on her tail. But each trial failed, and each left her position worse than before. She lay so quiet at last that we gathered round again.

"This is a bad job, Jess," I said.

She looked surprised to hear her name spoken by an entire stranger, and tried, I thought, to put her mane straight. But she said nothing.

"Better stand away from 'er 'ead, sir," the policeman said; and as I could do no good, and the rain was stopping, I was glad to hurry away; one of the ladies of the neighbourhood observing, as I did so, that she hoped I was going to communicate with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

An hour later I was returning by the same street, and, to my surprise, there the horse was still. She still lay helplessly and forlornly, partly on the straw and partly on the cinders. Her fore legs were still crooked in front of her. The rain was coming down hard again, and not many of the crowd were left—just a few boys and loafers.

Jess's driver was standing up with one or two other cabmen inside the door of the public-house.

"You haven't got her up yet," I said.

"No," he replied, "I'm afride its all over with 'er, pore old gal. She's bin goin' 'ome a long time. She'll never get up no more. One of my mates 'as bin up to the yard, and they're



"REMINDED ONE DISTANTLY OF THE BLONDIN DONKEY."

goin' to send a man to poleaxe her. She was a good little 'orse, too, when she'd a mind. 'E can't be long now."

Sure enough at this moment a couple of men came along the street with a cart behind them. One of the men carried an ugly-looking iron weapon, like a pickaxe, over his shoulder.

and wore a sickly-looking grin. The cabmen lounged out of



"THE POLICEMAN MOVED THE CROWD FURTHER BACK."

the public-house door, and Jess's driver nodded to the man with the poleaxe.

"Orl right?" he asked, gruffly.

"Orl right," returned the man.

"It's all up, old 'ooman," said the man in the frock coat and the bowler hat, "you can s'y your bloomin' prayers."

Jess's head turned feebly round, and her eyes lit with a gleam of intelligence as she took in the situation. Then she got up. She was very muddy.

"Well, I'll be hanged!" I said.

"Ah," said her driver, who did not appear very much surprised, "she's a very peculiar little 'orse, I can tell yer. Don't you take and think as she doesn't know a bit. Ay, love?"



The Monkey and the Stork.

BY FRED MILLER.



HERE'S A POLE
TO CLIMB.



WHAT A BANK
HOLIDAY I'M
HAVING.



I DIDN'T THINK I
SHOULD HAVE TO GET
ROUND THE CORNER.



WONDER WHAT'S UP
HERE?



I DIDN'T RECKON
ON THIS.



OH!



WHAT'S THE
DAMAGE?



"MINE! MINE!"

The Mystery of Black Rock Creek.

CHAPTER I.

BY JEROME K. JEROME.

ILLUSTRATED BY F. PEGRAM.

"HOW did he come here?"

"By the coach this evening. They found him lying in the road by Jenkins' Claim, and brought him on."

"And you don't know who he is, nor anything about him?"

"Nothing. He was quite unconscious when they picked him up, and has remained so ever since."

The Doctor thrust his hands into his trousers-pockets, and stood regarding the unconscious heap of humanity before him with an expression of profound thought. He was puzzling out to himself what answers to make should the Bar-keeper become inquisitive as to details, and clamour to know what was the particular ailment that made the stranger so curiously silent. The medical fraternity found practising in the Australian bush are not as a rule the pick of the profession.

"Do you think there's any hope for him?" asked the Bar-keeper, at last.

"Difficult to say," was the diplomatic, but, so far as "Doctor" Millett himself was personally concerned, most truthful reply. "If he has a good constitution he may pull through. Or," added the prudent Doctor, feeling the necessity of not committing himself to a one-sided opinion, "he may die to-night."

"Not very pleasant for me if he dies here," grumbled the Bar-keeper, with a comprehensive glance round the dismal shanty, that served himself for living room and sleeping apartment, and the scattered miners of Black Rock Creek for their one centre of social entertainment.

The silent stranger by a convulsive shiver slipped the pillows from beneath him, so that his head fell with a bump upon the rude bench where he lay stretched. The Doctor raised him in his arms.

"I'll call at the hut as I pass," he said quietly, as he with-

drew his arm from around the man's waist, "and send the Inspector down. Meanwhile I'll get you to take this to my place. My man will make it up for you. Get back as quickly as you can."

He scribbled, while speaking, a prescription, and, tearing out the leaf from his pocket-book, held it out to the Bar-keeper.

The man took it but stood hesitating.

"Who's to look after him?" he asked, jerking his thumb in the direction of the sick man.

The Doctor pushed a couple of the heavy chairs against the bench, and arranged the pillows to slightly better advantage.

"You'll find him here when you return," he answered. "No possible change can take place in him."

"Yes, but there can in my bar," returned the other sulkily; "somebody will be walking in and helping himself."

The Doctor laughed. "To your whiskey, Raynham! He won't take a second dose. Beside, who's likely to walk in? The boys are gone, and there aren't many chance customers knocking about Black Rock Creek of a night, are there?"

The man seemed but half persuaded.

"Well, you can never tell, and —"

"Ah, well, it must be done," was the impatient interruption; "I wouldn't ask you if I could go myself, but I can't. Pat Joyce's wife is dying the other side of the Creek and I must run over there. You can take the mare, I'll walk. You'll be back before I am if you're quick."

As the simplest way to end the argument, the Doctor picked up his hat and went out. The Bar-keeper, left alone, stood thinking.

Suddenly his lips parted with an exclamation.

"Why the devil didn't I think of it before," he muttered; "no wonder he's in such a hurry to have the police here."

Taking the dirt-encrusted lantern from the shelf, he bent down above the prostrate form upon the bench; but at that moment the Doctor's figure reappeared in the open doorway, and the Doctor's voice cried angrily to him to make haste.

"Damn him," growled the man; "I suppose he'll watch till I'm off."

He seized an old shawl, which he wrapped about his shoulders, for the night was cold, and plunged into the darkness.

It was well for man and beast that the Doctor's mare knew

every hole and boulder of the ill-laid road, for the Bar-keeper rode hard through the black night.

"Gentleman Jock," ex-financier, ex-miner, ex-jockey, ex-dead-beat, who now served the Doctor in the mixed capacity of medical assistant, groom, and cook, remarked upon the ill-concealed impatience with which he paced the verandah while the simple prescription of quinine and brandy, ventured upon by the bewildered Doctor, was being prepared, and was irritated by the same.

"It won't kill him, and it won't cure him," he grunted as he rammed the cork down. "One would fancy you were a young woman with your baby sick for the first time in its life."

"I've took an interest in him," answered the Bar-keeper, dryly, as, pocketing the bottle, he flung himself back into the saddle.

"Well, I guess he aint worth breaking the mare's neck over, whoever he may be, though your own mayn't much matter," shouted Gentleman Jock after him, as in response to a vicious cut, the animal dashed down the steep incline. A long experience of both had given Gentleman Jock a higher opinion of horses than of men. He objected to the nobler animal being sacrificed to the exigencies of the less.

A hundred yards from his own door, the Bar-keeper pulled up and dismounted. Throwing the bridle over his arm, he moved cautiously forward till close to the door of the hut, then paused and listened. No sound came from within. A feeble ray of light stole from the chink beneath the door, and struggled half-way across the road. The Bar-keeper raised his head. The troubled panting of the horse, the whispering of the pines, were the only sounds that reached him. Fastening the mare, he raised the latch noiselessly, and peered in. A stranger watching him from the shadow of the pines beyond, would have taken him for a thief rather than for a man crossing his own threshold.

The sick man lay on the bench between the high-backed chairs and the wall. The Bar-keeper could hear his steady breathing. It sounded easier and more regular. Closing the door behind him, he drew the bolt across softly, and, taking the lantern in his hand, crept up and passed its light backwards and forwards above the closed eyes.

The examination seemed to satisfy him, for, replacing the lantern on the table, he returned, and, moving the chairs out of

his way, felt round the sick man's waist for the leathern belt that during the last half hour had been ceaselessly pirouetting and twirling in devilish dances before his eager eyes.

As his hands touched it, however, he paused. Hastily crossing to the window he drew carefully the tattered curtains over every inch of pane, then resumed with feverish haste his task. The sick man lay heavily, and it was necessary to move him to draw the belt away. Once a smothered sound escaped his lips, as if, in spite of the unconsciousness of his body, some watchful corner of his brain were protesting against the robbery. The Bar-keeper waited with the sweat upon his hands and face, expecting the white eyelids to open, but no movement followed, and with a little more manœuvring, the belt fell heavily to the floor and lay coiled about the Bar-keeper's feet.

He picked it up, and, taking it to the table, examined it by the dim light of the lantern. From every pocket as he opened it there poured forth gold. It made a glittering pile upon the rude table. The Bar-keeper's hands caressed it lovingly, lingeringly. The yellow light from the lantern close to his cheek showed a gaping mouth wreathed round with fatuous smiles. In his utterly bestial excitement the saliva trickled down unheeded from his mouth on to the table.

Suddenly from the shadows behind him arose a hoarse, croaking cry as of some inarticulate thing struggling for a voice. The coins in his hand fell with a rattle on the floor and rolled away, and the cry crept round him again freezing his face into terror.

Slowly he turned his head to see a figure with two claw-like hands stretched out against him, to hear a voice he thought at first came from the dead, crying, "Mine, mine."

He remained spell-bound to his chair, and the figure tottered forward step by step, till with one out-thrust arm it touched his glittering heap.

The action roused the Bar-keeper from his stupor. With a snarl as of an angry animal he flung himself upon the weak swaying thing. Seizing the shawl he had hastily unwrapped from his shoulders, he held it pressed against the sick man's face, stifling the thin cries. Slowly he forced him back to the bench still holding the shawl tight pressed about his head, till the feeble struggles ceased and the long arms fell listless to the floor. Then the Bar-keeper unwound the shawl and looked at the dead face.

To hide the belt and gold, to replace the body naturally upon the bench was his next care. This done, he drew back the curtains from the window, and opening the door leant idly against it waiting.

He had completed his labour none too soon, for as he threw away the match that lighted his cigar the sound of footsteps reached him, and the figures of the Doctor and the Inspector drew away from the gloom and became distinct.

The Bar-keeper was the first to speak.

"Dead," he said curtly, as the Doctor stepped into the framework of the door.

"Dead! already?"

"I found him dead when I got back; I thought 't warn't the thing to leave him."

The Doctor made no reply, but passed straight over to where the dead man lay. The Inspector closed the door.

The Doctor seemed strangely interested in his case, and it was some minutes before he spoke. Then he said quietly,—

"This man never died. He has been murdered."

"It's a lie!" cried the Bar-keeper. "I tell you he was dead when I got back."

"I tell you," repeated the Doctor quietly, "he has been murdered—poisoned."

He took a glass from the shelf above the dead man's head—"Poisoned with henbane. His whole body stinks of it. Why, there's enough left in the glass to have killed a dozen men."

And the Bar-keeper stood staring from the Doctor to the Inspector; and the Inspector, who was an officer of wide experience, said to himself, "This man knows nothing of it, anyhow."

CHAPTER II.

BY EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

ILLUSTRATED BY JAMES GREIG.

The Bar-keeper was the first to speak. He saw Fate had played into his hand and felt that the least he could do was to score the trick at once. So he spoke politely to the Inspector.

"I reckon it's one of two things, 'Spec. Either there came along somebody and done this devil's job while I was fetchin' the poor toad his physic, or else he done it himself. You see



"WHO IN GOD'S NAME ARE YOU?"

the shelf's within reach of his 'and. And if he woke up, torn with thirst, and got his paw on a glass with liquid in it, maybe, in his mazed state, he'd a' sopped it up and never stopped to think."

"What's the action of this 'ere stuff, Doctor?" asked the Inspector, not paying much attention to Raynham.

"Depends on how much he was given—"

"Or took," suggested Raynham. "Maybe, Doctor Millett," he continued, "you'll haul him over now, poor devil, and me an' 'Spec 'll bear witness of what you find. All that's known 'pears to be that the cove come by coach, that he told the driver to drop him by Flying Fox Corner, and that two hours later he was found insensible not a hundred yards from where he got off the coach by Jenkins' Claim."

Doctor Millett had already begun to assist Inspector Mark. They removed the dead man's coat and waistcoat and, as they did so, from the pocket of the former dropped a letter. This the Doctor took to the light and read, while Inspector Mark continued to strip the corpse.

"Listen," said Millett presently, after reading the communication. "Here's a mighty strange story. Blest if we ain't up to our necks in the tidiest mystery that ever made men scratch their heads in Black Rock Creek. Listen to this." And he read the following communication :—

"Dear Ned, you'd better watch it pretty sharp and keep your weather eye lifting, for young Peterkin *hasn't panned out after all*. In fact the cuss is on his damned legs again and hopping round lively as a grig. Of course he don't know what you're playing at—not yet. But Sally's hardly to be trusted. Half a word from her and he'd be on your track like a blood-hound. Get rid of the stone at all costs. The dibs is your own and mine—you can just shovel them into the bank when you get to Sydney; but the stone's different. You'll have to take that to Europe. He looks at the quartz in the case and doesn't see the difference. But any day the cat may be out of the bag.

"Yours,

"T. F."

"Not much light in that, I'm thinking," commented Millett.

"Here's one glimmer of light, maybe, and only one," said Inspector Mark. "Look at this. 'Twas round his neck."

He showed them a little bag made of soft chamois leather with a receptacle of about an inch in depth. It was hung upon a very delicate gold chain, next his skin; and it was empty. The Inspector said, "That's about all I find. There ain't no big hunk of money as that letter alludes to, but there's a gold pencil-case in the waistcoat pocket, and a pipe and baccy and a few stray shillings and some cards done up in a bit of paper. The cards has 'The Honble. Ralph Peterkin' on 'em."

"And yet if the letter is to be believed, this is one Ned or Edward; the envelope is addressed certainly to the Honble. Ralph Peterkin. Moreover the letter is a month old."

Doctor Millett turned to look at the dead man. He had been handsome in life and, whether blue-blooded or not, certainly showed an almost patrician cast of features.

"Shall you want to cut the cove up, Doctor?" asked Inspector Mark calmly.

"I think not. There is no need. But, of course, an official inquiry must be held. It is a difficult matter. We find him first insensible. Then he is left here by himself about an hour or more——"

"More," said the Bar-keeper.

"More. And Raynham comes back and finds him poisoned. You see, Raynham, a good deal depends on you. Mark must decide as to whether you're to be locked up or not. You say he was dead when you came back. I don't doubt it, but the law's bound to doubt everybody in a fix like this. It's clear this man was personating some chap called Ralph Peterkin. It's also clear, from the letter, that he had money of his own and a diamond or some precious stone stolen from somebody else. But neither gold nor diamond are on him now, though we can guess he had a diamond or something in that chamois leather bag."

"We can't say as he 'ad them things on him when he come to my bar," declared Raynham.

"No—so far as the diamond was concerned. But I'll swear he wore a heavy belt, for I felt it when I lifted him and put my arm round him. Where's that belt? Who took it off?" asked the Doctor.

"It's a mighty tangle, sure enough. I'll have to search the bar anyhow, Raynham," said Mark. "And I'll ask you to help me if it's all the same to you. There's a missing belt—see? Well, if I don't find that here it proves you honest anyway."

"Or else deeper than we think you," said Doctor Millett calmly. He did not trust Mr. Raynham far.

Raynham scowled, but felt pretty comfortable and triumphant. He had hidden the belt and its contents under the floor of the room in which they stood. The rough board was nailed back in its place. Twenty detectives would hardly have pulled up the floor planking.

"Look in welcome, and I'll 'elp with all my 'eart," said the Bar-keeper. "But if you asks me, I reckon belt and gold and diamond's all a-making tracks and leaving more space 'twixt them and this poor clay every minute of the night. It's twelve now. Him as broke in while I was away might be twenty mile off by this if he had a tidy horse."

Inspector Mark made a thorough search by lantern light, but nothing rewarded it until its conclusion. Then he returned to the room in which the dead man lay.

"We've found nothing, Doc.," he said to Millett, who was still bending over the corpse.

"But I have, Mark. I was wrong. Henbane never killed this man. See, it is the bottle of the stuff that fell and broke and saturated his coat and shirt. The bottle was knocked from the shelf. It might have been by one of the rats that swarm here. The glass is dry at the rim and sides. It has not been moved. The henbane in it was poured out long ago. Why did not you mention that, Raynham?"

"I didn't think of it. I poured the stuff out, as you say, and soaked cheese in it for them same rats."

"Well, it was not poison killed this man. An autopsy will be necessary now. I shall . . ."

He was interrupted in a manner very startling. Mark, still pursuing his search, had reached a tall cupboard at one corner of the room in which they were assembled. He threw it open and started violently back as he did so, for within it stood a woman—a pale, wild-eyed creature dressed in black—a stranger to them all.

"Who in God's name are you, and how did you get here?" asked Raynham, who first found his tongue.

"I can explain if you will listen," she answered. "I came by the coach which brought this unhappy man to-day. My name is Sarah Peterkin."



"HE QUALIFIED IT FOR HER."

CHAPTER III.

By E. F. BENSON.

ILLUSTRATED BY A. S. BOYD.

Sarah Peterkin paused dramatically for a moment on the threshold of the high dark cupboard. She had not played leading lady in melodramatic tragedy on the boards of third-rate provincial theatres for nothing. Unexpected entrances into rooms where strangers were wrangling over dead bodies were in fact her *forte*, and had earned her the title of "the diviner Sarah" from more than one ingenious admirer.

The pause reached its artistic climax, and Sarah spoke again.

"I'll be stepping down," she said.

The Inspector extended a somewhat grimy hand, and Sarah descended into the room.

"It was mighty stuffy in there," she said, "and I'll take a drink."

Certainly the divine Sarah was in no hurry. She moved leisurely over to the bar and Raynham poured her out a glass of the maligned whiskey. Whether the fact that Raynham had not offered the Doctor any led to that gentleman's disparaging remark about it, or whether the divine Sarah's taste was less educated than his is doubtful; it is, however, perfectly certain that she drank it with gusto. It is also certain that she said a couple of words to Raynham as he qualified it for her, that a smile of intelligence crossed his usually unilluminated face, and that he nodded to her.

The Doctor threw a rug over the half-naked body, and waited patiently for the divine Sarah to finish her refection. That lady wiped her mouth with an exceedingly tidy lace-edged handkerchief, and turned to the company.

"Who stands treat?" she remarked.

The Doctor and Inspector made a show of feeling in their pockets, but Raynham interrupted.

"The loss is the bank's," he said.

Sarah crossed the room and seated herself on the end of the bench where the corpse lay. The others felt that she was mistress of the situation, and waited for her to develop it.

"Seems to me," she said, denuding herself, figuratively

speaking, of the burden, "that we'd just better have a talk over this matter. If this gentleman—indicating the Inspector—would assume the part of High Jury, the witnesses—which is chiefly me—will lay the case before him. The Judge——"

The Doctor was considered a humorist of the first water by the higher circles in Black Rock Creek, and he decided to make a joke.

"Our unknown friend here will be the judge," said he, pointing to the corpse.

Sarah did not laugh, but gave him a look out of the third act of "*La Tosca*."

"Exactly," she said. "Ned shall be the judge."

There was a pause, and Sarah shifted her seat slightly and looked straight at the Doctor.

"The Honourable Edward Peterkin has taken his seat," she remarked. "The trial will now be commencing."

For the second time that evening a gleam of intelligence shot across Raynham's face, but, ashamed of exhibiting such weakness, he instantly repressed it.

Sarah, who seemed to be doubling the parts of witness and judge, in the indisposition of the latter, turned and addressed the jury, who was sitting cross-legged on a two-legged stool, and balancing it with much accuracy.

"I'm the wife of the judge's brother," she said, "and my name is the Honourable Sarah Peterkin, usually known as Sally. He married me last July, and as times were bad I remained behind in Dunkeld followin' the histrionic profession, and he went up to Broken Hill. He an' his brother—the Honourable Edward Peterkin, whom the jury sees his lordship before him—had a claim together. There was another woman up there, and I guess Ralph, that's my husband, felt lonesome without me, so he took up with her, which proceedin' was in bad taste."

The Doctor here interpolated a remark.

"Dam' bad taste," he said.

"You've not seen the other woman," remarked Sarah, "so not knowin' you can't say. Then Ralph and Ned between them got hold of Black Jack."

"Who was Black Jack?" demanded the jury.

"Black Jack was a big diamond, comin' from up country, being white by nature. Ned and Ralph quarrelled over Black Jack, and what between Black Jack and the other woman, there

was, you may say, bad blood between them, as Ned said Ralph was a married man; an' ought to know better, whereas he was untrammelled, an' was lookin' out for a wife himself. An' so they parted, Ned having got hold of Black Jack by fair means or foul—knowin' Ned well, I should say foul—and Ralph followed him down to Dunkeld, swearin' and ragin' round. Then he lost sight of him, an' here Ned lies. An' the question before the jury is who killed Ned, and where's Black Jack? I've been in that black bathing machine in the corner an hour or more, and kin form a guess or two about it. An' now the other witnesses will say what they know. Also there was a belt of dibs round Ned's waist. That's a matter of less importance; there bein' only a hundred or so of them, and Black Jack was worth fifty of these belts. Black Jack, I may say, was on Ned when he was brought into this house."

"How do you know?" asked the jury.

"'Cause I saw it."

The humorous Doctor found it hard to break himself of a habit which had become inveterate.

"Them as sees believes," he remarked, jocosely.

The divine Sarah favoured him with another look.

"Give your evidence," she said, "an' don't scatter inspersions over others. Wait till the jury an' the judge has had an opportunity of scatterin' inspersions over your remarks."

The Doctor spat thoughtfully on the floor.

"I was coming up from Jenkins' claim this evening," he said, "and was told there was a man lyin' here deadly sick. I saw him, and sent Raynham to my house with a prescription, while I went to see another case over the creek. I came back here, with the jury, and found the corpse lying dead. Raynham had already returned and was alone in the house."

Sarah looked impartially at all the witnesses in turn.

"You forget the lady in the cupboard," she said.

The Doctor disregarded the interruption, and went on.

"I have since learned there was a lady in the cupboard," he said. "The corpse had a belt on when I left the house, and the belt was missing when I came back. The lady assures me also that he had a diamond on him when he was brought here, and that also is missing now. And that," he remarked gaily, "closes the case for the prosecution."

"For the defence," said the divine Sarah.

"How do you make out that?" asked the last witness.

Sarah stood up.

"You've given your defence very well," she said, "but it's a little incomplete in detail. The third witness, Mr. Raynham, will now give his evidence, which no doubt will supply some little deficiencies in yours, an' I shall have the pleasure of collaboratin' him."

"Corroborate," suggested the jury, tentatively.

"Corroborate or collaborate, it's all one," said Sarah.

But before Mr. Raynham had time to get on his feet the door opened, and the divine Sarah emitted a sound which partook of the nature of a gurgle, a scream, and a gasp, and which if she had produced it on the stage would have made her ingenious admirers think her even diviner than ever.

CHAPTER IV.

BY F. FRANKFORT MOORE.

ILLUSTRATED BY SYDNEY COWELL.

The door had opened slowly. It remained ajar for the few seconds during which that singularly complex vocal effort was made by the woman, and then it closed quickly. But Sarah's eyes continued glaring at the roughly-planed boards that constituted the panels of the door. She glared, then gave a gasp—such a glare and such a gasp would have made her fortune on the boards of those theatres in England which make a speciality of those potent elements of histrionic art, the glare and the gasp. Then she staggered back a step or two, and in another instant she had snatched the covering from the face of the corpse. She bent her face down to that face—the Inspector could not at that moment have said which of the two was the more ghastly—scrutinising it eagerly. Still keeping her eyes fixed upon the eyes that stared glassily up from the bench to the rough beams of the roof, she put out her arm and felt along the wall until she had grasped the tin lantern with the guttering candle inside it—the sole illumination of the place. She swung it down to the dead face, so that a wave of sickly light swept over the pallid, rigid features.

A crash, and then darkness followed.

She had let the lantern fall, and she herself had dropped upon the end of the bench, without a cry.

"What the blazes!" shouted the Inspector, leaping to his



"BAIL UP, MY LAD!"

feet and striking a match, which he sheltered from the many draughts of the "shanty" with his capacious hands, while the Doctor groped for the lantern and endeavoured to set up the candle once more. "What the blazes do you mean by dropping the glim?"

"Isn't it something like contempt of Court, my lass?" said the facetious physician, replacing the freshly-lighted lantern.

The Bar-keeper said nothing. He shifted a foot or two in the direction of the door.

"Heavens above!" muttered the woman. "Oh, heavens above! What does this mean?"

"That's just what we want to know, my fine lady," said the Inspector. "What did you see at the door?"

The three men had been so seated that the door had opened upon them, thus preventing them from seeing through the entrance. The woman alone had been in a position to see by whom the door had been opened.

"Come, madam," said the Doctor; "Remember the important official position you occupy—remember what's due to the honourable Court. What the Lord Chancellor did you see at the door?"

Sarah looked at the speaker, then at the Inspector, and lastly at Raynham.

"What did I see?—what did I see? Is that what you ask me?" she said.

"That was the inquiry of the Court, madam," said the Doctor, with a very humorous bow.

"I'll tell you what I saw, though you'll call me a liar," said she.

"Very probably," remarked the Inspector dryly.

"Oh, no, no; couldn't think of such unpoliteness," said the Doctor.

The Bar-keeper said nothing; only he got a foot nearer to the door.

"The door opened—you saw it; though, being on the off side, you couldn't see out," said she.

"That's true, any way," acquiesced the Inspector.

"Inspector Mark couldn't inspect or mark anything," said the facetious physician.

"What did you see?" cried the Inspector.

"Him!" cried the woman, starting to her feet and pointing to the corpse. "I saw him at the door."

"The dead man? I reckon that's a whopper," said the Inspector. "He didn't budge."

"I saw him—him!" cried the woman. "He opened the door and stood there for a moment—long enough!—the light shone upon his face. He gave me a look—a look that I understood well—too well—a look that said, 'Denounce my murderer! Denounce my murderer!' I obey that voice. Dick Raynham, I denounce you in the presence of witnesses as the murderer of this man!"

She swept round and pointed a melodramatic finger at the Bar-keeper.

In a second he was pointing something at her—not a finger, but the barrel of a revolver. The flash of the light on the steel, the sound of the shot, the shriek of the woman, and the crash of the bullet into the centre of the tin lantern, occupied but one second. The next, the Inspector and the Doctor had fired their revolvers on chance in the direction of the door.

The bullets went into the open air.

The door was open and Dick Raynham had escaped.

"Follow him—follow him, if you are men!" yelled the woman. "You cowards! give me a shootin' iron and I'll follow him myself."

"Keep your back hair on," said the Inspector. "The troopers will have heard the shootin', and if we don't have our hands on him in half-an-hour they'll do for him. Come along, Doc. He's sure to make for the gulch."

The two men hurried out into the starlit night, the Inspector mounting his horse, which he had hitched outside, and the Doctor getting astride his wiry little mare.

They galloped across the cleared scrub in the direction of the notorious Choke-neck Gulch—a wild gully just above Black Rock Creek, which had for years constituted a place of refuge for such members of the criminal population of the neighbourhood as had overstepped the boundary of discretion in some moment of excitement.

The entrance to the gulch was by a narrow path, and on this path the two horsemen pulled up.

"We're here a bit ahead of him," remarked the Inspector. "There's no way that he could reach here sooner, unless he flew, and that's not Dick's form."

"No; he's a good liar but a bad flyer," said the humorous medico.

"He'll have to fly if he wants to escape our revolvers," said the Inspector. "He'll walk into our arms. Eh, what's that? Listen. By the Lord Harry, he has got a horse and is coming straight for us! Keep well in cover, Doc, and we'll cry 'Bail up!' before he can whip out his iron."

This programme was rigidly carried out. The horses were backed among the rocks, and each of the men cocked his revolver and waited silently, while the sound of galloping hoofs became more distinct. In a few minutes the horseman was within twenty yards of the entrance, and then the Inspector and the Doctor forced their horses out, shouting "Bail up! my lad!" as they covered the new-comer with their revolvers.

He threw his horse on its haunches.

"Hallo, Inspector, what's all this?" he cried.

The man was one of the Inspector's troopers.

"What, Stanley? Good!" said the Inspector. "Man, we took you for the fellow we're in search of."

"I heard the shots," said the trooper, "and I guessed that there was something bright going on. I looked in at the saloon and saw Raynham."

"Saw whom?" the Inspector shouted.

"Raynham. Was it a murder do you think?"

"You mean to say that you saw Raynham in the shanty?"

"Of course I did."

Without another word the Inspector sent his horse forward with a bound. He galloped back to the shanty that passed by the name of the saloon, the other two following him. They all dismounted at the open door, the Inspector entering with his revolver in his hand.

A candle was burning, stuck in the neck of a bottle, and its light showed that the place was empty; only along the bench the body was lying.

"Now where's the man you said you left here?" the Inspector asked of the trooper.

"Where? Why there, to be sure; where else would he be?" said the trooper.

He jerked his thumb in the direction of the body on the bench.

"You're a fool," said the Inspector. "That's— Great Lord Harry! What's this, anyway?"

He snatched up the bottle and held the light close to the dead man's face.

"Great Lord ! great Lord !" he said.

It was the Bar-keeper, Dick Raynham, who was lying dead on the bench in the very place that had been occupied by the man whom he had robbed and murdered.

CHAPTER V.

BY BARRY PAIN.

ILLUSTRATED BY HERBERT JOHNSON.

The Doctor examined carefully the body of the dead man. The face of the corpse was distorted and looked horrible in the candle-light.

"Shot?" said the Inspector laconically.

"No," replied the Doctor.

"Then how?"

"I can't say yet. It's a queer case—looks to me as if he'd died from some shock—from a fright."

"Where's the other corpse?" said the Inspector. "And where's the woman? She was a clever 'un that woman was." He took up the candle and walked to the cupboard. It was empty. In returning to the bench, he stumbled and fell; his foot had caught in a hole in the flooring, a board had been up and not replaced. "See that!" said the Inspector as he re-lit the candle.

"Yes; what does it mean?"

"It means that *pro tem.* we've been done. That was where the bilk was hidden, and I don't like being done, even *pro tem.* Stanley, be off, and bring a couple of men to watch here. Then when you come back, you and I will go and search for that woman in the gulch. We must get her—she's at the bottom of this. Will you come with us, Doctor?"

The Doctor shook his head. "No," he said. "I've had enough of this, I'm off home." After a little more talk with the Inspector, he mounted his horse and rode off. About a couple of hundred yards away he thought that he heard voices in the brushwood by the side of the road. He pulled up short. All was silent, and he rode on again.

If he had pursued his investigations further he would have found something. He would have found the dead body of Ned Peterkin, and on one side of it, seated with her knees drawn up



"TELL ME WHO TOOK THAT DIAMOND OR I'LL BLOW YOUR BRAINS OUT."

to her chin, the Hon. Mrs. Ralph Peterkin, and on the other side of it, Ralph Peterkin himself.

Even in the dim starlight the remarkable likeness which Ralph bore to his dead brother was noticeable. He, also, was seated on the ground, and beside him lay a spade, a clasp-knife open, and the dead man's belt.

"Curious," said Sarah, in a low voice, "that we two should be in partnership again."

"Husband and wife," said Ralph, shrugging his shoulders.

"You can stow that," she retorted dryly.

"It's a bond between us," said the man. "You can't get over it. Why did you send me word that Ned had played me false while I was down with the fever, unless it was because you were my wife?"

"I wanted you to get back the stone because of Ida."

"What the devil had she to do with it? She went off in the end with Ned's pal, Tom Ferris, the same that gave him the tip that I had got the better of the fever, and was likely to be suspicious. Ida wasn't for Ned; no, and she wasn't for me either."

"That's true, but you were both after the woman. You quarrelled about her as you quarrelled about what share each was to hold in the diamond. If Ida had been good enough to go off with you, I had a notion that you would both die—to prevent any accidents, I would have seen that you both died myself. Well then, I should have been left a widow, and, as I thought you should leave your widow properly provided for, I was anxious that you should get back the stone. You managed your part of the business badly. You made a great noise and foamed at the mouth, and did nothing. It was a good idea of his to pass himself off as you. You missed the track of him at Dunkeld."

"Did I?" said the man in a surly voice.

"Yes, you did, and I took it up. It was your notion, I believe, that I wasn't going to be on in this act, but I was. I came here by coach expecting to find Ned here; instead of that we found him lying in the road by Jenkin's Claim. I didn't let on that I knew anything about him. He had been drugged—that was what was the matter with him. Doctor was a fool, or he'd have seen it. When the Doctor took him on to Raynham's I followed at a bit of a distance behind. The Doctor and Raynham went out, and I slipped in; I'd noticed the chain

round his neck and guessed he had the diamond there, undoing his collar brought him round for a minute and I couldn't do anything."

"You told the Inspector that you'd seen the diamond to-night."

"So I did. And I tell you that I couldn't do anything. If you want to see that stone again you'll take your orders from me, tell the truth, and ask no questions. To proceed. Just then Raynham came back with the medicine for Ned, and I hid myself in the cupboard. Ned seemed to have dropped off again. I saw Raynham steal the belt and murder Ned. I saw him hide the money where we took it from just now. Then the Inspector and the Doctor came in, and found me in the cupboard; you were listening outside and heard all I said then, I suppose."

The man nodded.

"And you were fool enough to push the door open. I saw you, and it scared me. I was afraid they'd take the light and look for you; so I dropped it, to create a diversion; and when they'd lit it again, I began a bit of melodramatic business that I had seen in the door the ghost of Ned calling on me to denounce his murderer."

"Yes, yes. I saw all that," said Ralph impatiently. "Then the shootin' began. The Inspector went off to the gulch."

"Yes, he's a one-idea man, that Inspector. He's probably looking for me there now. Raynham went round to the back of his shanty without seeing me and dropped there, waiting. I came in then, and we lit the candle."

"But why was it that when Raynham came back—to get the belt and make off with it, I suppose—and saw me standing in the doorway, he just gasped and dropped dead like that?"

"Simple enough. Raynham drank too much, and his heart had gone. He was already scared, and when he saw you he thought you were the ghost of the man he had murdered. He died of fright."

"Why did you leave him there, and make me carry Ned here?"

"Don't ask questions. When the dawn comes, you'll know—and, if you do as you're told, you'll have the diamond back again. To speak more accurately, you'll have a half-share in the diamond."

"That's not fair."

"Very well ; without me you'll get nothing."

"All right," said the man, "I go under—always have."

"Now then, I'll put a question to you. Who drugged Ned?"

"Don't know."

"That's a lie. How came you here to-night at all?"

"Don't know. I was tramping about, miscellaneously."

"That also is a lie." Sarah smiled sweetly ; she was playing the part of the person who, in a difficult situation has the whip-hand, and she enjoyed it. "And," she added, "you'd much better tell me the truth."

The man pulled out his revolver. "Now then, you devil, I'll have my turn. Tell me who took that diamond, or I'll blow your brains out."

Sarah laughed pleasantly. "This ain't an enjoyable world," she said. "I'd think no more about leaving it than you would about puttin' me out of it. You'll get nothing from me that way. If you want a half share in that diamond you will hand me your revolver and tell me the truth."

The man glared at her sullenly for a minute, and then handed her his revolver. "I lighted by chance," he said, "on Ned's track two nights ago. I daren't track him in the ordinary way, and I got a chap to give him drugged baccy. I was just coming up to him when that damned coach picked him up, and by the time that I got to Raynham's shanty, the diamond was gone."

"That will do," said Sarah. "I'm going to sleep till dawn."

"I can't sleep alongside of that," said Ralph, with a glance towards the corpse. "I'll dig a hole and bury him first."

"No, you won't. If you can't sleep you may keep awake. It will only be for an hour. What are you frightened of? Dead men do no harm."

In the end Peterkin did drop off to sleep. He was waked by Sarah touching him on the shoulder.

"Get up," she said. "It's time to get back the diamond. Ned swallowed it when he thought I was going to take it from him, and it's there," she touched the body with her foot.

Ralph shuddered, picked up the clasp-knife, and threw it down again.

"I can't do that," he said. "I can't hack open ——"

"You fool, don't talk about it. That's what makes it worse."

I tried to do it and couldn't. You *must*. Here—I brought this from Raynham's when we skedaddled last night."

It was a bottle of whisky. Ralph took a deep draught at it, drew a long breath, and then suddenly knelt down beside his dead brother with the clasp-knife open in his hand. Sally stood at a little distance, covering him with the revolver.

There was no necessity for it. In a few minutes Ralph rose and came towards her, rubbing something with a rag of the clothes that the dead man had worn. His knees were shaking; even if he had meant treachery, he would have been physically incapable of running away with the diamond. The body was buried and the spade and knife hidden in the brushwood. Then the two moved away together.

"It's halves, then?" said Ralph.

"In the stone and the belt—yes."

"If we get to England—that is."

"We shall," said Sarah confidently.



An Immortal Monkey.

By FRED WHISHAW.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY CECIL ALDIN.

IT was a small brown monkey, very much like other monkeys—so like that I don't think I need enter into any minute details in describing it. It had the same air of preternatural gravity and wisdom as the rest, combined with the usual engaging laxity of moral sense. There are a dozen like Kirjath Jearim at the Zoo at this very moment. But then Kirjath was an enlightened monkey. He was neither so flighty nor so given up to German *Turnverein* gymnastics as some of his tribe; nor did the devil so frequently enter into him and cause him to do things which he knew to be wrong, such as stealing his mistress's false teeth, or dropping in a sitting posture upon the bass notes of the grand piano from high places. If he had not been a very wise monkey he would have done both these things pretty often, for the effect, when he had tried it, had been delightful; but Kirjath *was* a wise monkey, and knew very well which side his bread was buttered, and that it was desirable to keep upon good terms with his old mistress—his kind, doting, indulgent mistress. Now, dropping on to the keyboard, especially at the bass end, from the cornice above the curtain, had produced, as he had discovered, the charming and interesting effect of sending the old lady into a fit, and causing her to lie on her back in the middle of the drawing-room carpet, and to tap the floor with her heels in a very delightful manner, while a watering-pot, with which she had been refreshing the



"KIRJATH JEARIM."



"DROPPING ON THE KEYBOARD PRODUCED THE CHARMING AND INTERESTING EFFECT OF
SENDING THE OLD LADY INTO A FIT."

flowers, rested upon her ample waist and emptied its contents in a ravishing manner over the carpet. But Kirjath had found the final result of such glorious enterprises disappointing; for while Mrs. Giddens, his indulgent mistress, was confined to her bed, as she was for several days after such an experience as the above, he found that he was shamefully neglected by the rest of the establishment. Therefore Kirjath, who was, as I say, an enlightened monkey, rarely indulged in practical jokes which reacted upon his own well-being.

I do not suppose there ever was a monkey better cared for and more affectionately cherished than this fortunate Kirjath Jearim. There was no delicacy, beloved of his tribe, that was denied to him. He fed upon the fat of the land, for his mistress was rich, and, with the exception of the minister of her favourite chapel, there was no one upon whom she felt inclined to lavish the treasures of her mature affections, save Kirjath Jearim. He was the apple of her eye, the joy of her existence. True, the apple appeared to be somewhat rotten at the core on occasions such as that alluded to above; but little lapses of good taste are to be expected, at times, even from the sedatest of monkeys, and such-like little eccentricities were soon forgiven and forgotten by Mrs. Giddens in her beloved Kirjath.

But alas! his mistress fell ill and died, and for some few days Kirjath was greatly puzzled and offended by the silence in the house, and by the neglect with which he was treated by the servants, who scarcely remembered to give him sufficient plain food to keep body and soul together. Kirjath was obliged to preserve his spirits by indulging in forbidden pranks and gymnastics, which were all the sweeter to his soul because forbidden. When the mourners came to the house in order to fetch away its late proprietress they were shocked and amazed to hear a terrific strumming on the grand piano, especially upon the bass notes. They all agreed that such conduct in any member of the family was most improper at this time of sorrow and mourning. It was Kirjath, playing his favourite game in his loneliness and hunger.

And hungry and lonely the poor neglected monkey remained for several days, until suddenly a bright and beautiful time dawned for him.

This was when Mrs. Giddens' will was produced. It was brought to the next-of-kin by a small solicitor—not her own family lawyer—and read. It had been thought hitherto that the

old lady died intestate. Her nephew and only relative had already made arrangements to take over the considerable fortune left by her—a matter of four thousand a year—when suddenly Grimby, the solicitor, appeared and produced the will, and that nephew discovered that he was not to enjoy quite so easy a succession as he had hoped.

The terms of the will were, roughly, as follows :

One thousand pounds per annum, in consols, to certain religious and charitable bodies.

Two thousand a year to Kirjath Jearim, together with the house and its contents. Young Giddens, the nephew,

was appointed trustee, and was to enjoy the entire control of the money *during the lifetime of Kirjath*. When the monkey should be proved to have paid the debt of nature, and to have retired to that retreat where good monkeys go, the entire fortune reverted to the religious community to which Mrs. Giddens had

belonged. Two hundred a year was left to the family lawyers, Clapton & Fox, to last as long as Kirjath lived, and to be regarded as payment for their supervision, both of him and of young Mr. Giddens, his trustee. Grimby had a hundred a year to look after Clapton & Fox, and the servants were left legacies to keep an eye on everybody all round, and to see that Kirjath was properly treated, and that the authorities of Hezekiah Chapel did not come round and annihilate the monkey in order to succeed to their property sooner than they would do in the natural march of events.

Needless to say that Kirjath Jearim had an exceedingly happy time after this. If he had been indulged in his good mistress's time, he was indulged tenfold now. He lived upon pineapples, cocoanuts, filberts, biscuits, and everything that the heart of monkey could desire ; nothing that was wholesome was



"GRIMBY, THE SOLICITOR."

too good for him. He was not crossed in any way, lest the annoyance should interfere with his digestion ; he was allowed to do thunder and earthquakes as much as ever he pleased upon the keyboard of the grand piano, upon which a velvet pad had been arranged, lest he should hurt himself on the black notes, which, as every real musician knows, stick up in a manner which is vexatious, if regarded from the point of view of one descending upon them from a height. Young Giddens did not even protest when Kirjath shied empty cocoanuts at his head from the top of the bookcase, and Kirjath was a very good shot. Young Giddens did not like it altogether, for cocoanuts, even when empty, are not an unmixed pleasure if accurately aimed—and Kirjath sometimes aimed very accurately ; but he did not choose to say anything for fear of giving offence and indigestion.

Once a month Giddens and the three lawyers dined together in order to see that all was right, and a merry, jovial party they were. Kirjath was had in on such occasions to dessert, and feasted (on strictly dietarian lines), and petted and made much of. Once every six months the Rev. Mr. Spriggins, minister of Hezekiah, and a churchwarden, were invited to one of these gatherings, in order that they might be assured of the welfare and identity of Kirjath Jearim. On such occasions Mr. Spriggins closely, if furtively, observed the personal appearance of the wealthy ape ; for this good minister—in the course of his studies in mankind—had unfortunately formed conclusions adverse to the *bonâ fides* of his fellow men ; he mistrusted everyone—even lawyers—and suspected the basest designs in every person whom he knew to be interested in the well-being of Kirjath. How was he to know—he asked himself—that this monkey was in real truth the monkey he was represented to be ? Therefore, Mr. Spriggins was suspicious and watchful.

Now this watchfulness of Mr. Spriggins made Mr. Grimby think very deeply ; it induced young Giddens to meditate also ; it even caused the prosperous and somewhat ponderous Clapton & Fox to bethink themselves, and a committee meeting was held in order to discuss matters. For though, providentially, all was well with Kirjath up to now, the reflection that matters might at any time take an adverse turn was not a pleasant one to all these gentlemen, whose income depended upon his welfare. All agreed, however, that there was nothing to be done ; Kirjath must be well taken care of ; it would not



be right to—so to speak—get another Kirjath and keep him up one's sleeve in case of accident. Oh, no! certainly not. No honourable man would do such a thing. Kirjath must be

taken great care of, and there was nothing else to be done! Nevertheless, from this day on there were certain changes made in the order of things. Grimby's hundred a year was increased by young Giddens to three hundred; Grimby was sent abroad for his health, and when he returned, which he did after a month or two, his luggage included a large crate marked, "Live poultry, with care!" and he took up his abode permanently at the house of young Giddens, or rather of K. Jearim, Esq., and occupied three large rooms on the top landing. He fed his poultry on coconuts and biscuits, I believe, for economical reasons. There

were always plenty left over from Kirjath's table, and Grimby's poultry thrive on them, though—I am told—they laid no eggs.

"KIRJATH SOMETIMES AIMED VERY ACCURATELY."

So matters remained for a year or two, and now it gradually became sadly evident to the friends of Kirjath that that important individual was not quite the monkey he was wont to be in the golden days of youth. Old age was creeping upon him. It was not that he had desisted from the occupations and delights of his kind ; he still loved to descend, like a bolt from the blue, upon the keyboard when young Mr. Giddens dozed in an arm chair, and at other similarly favourable moments ; but he was



" HIS LUGGAGE INCLUDED A LARGE CRATE."

distinctly stiffer than of old, and one day he jumped short of the piano and barked his shins and elbows against the hard edge instead of banging down full on the bass notes ; a shelf was therefore placed on the wall at a distance more suitable and convenient for a monkey of his years, and from this vantage point he was able to play his favourite tunes on the piano with ease and comfort.

But one day a shocking thing happened.

Kirjath Jearim who, pleasant as was his lot, and kind and indulgent as his friends were, was, nevertheless, not absolutely a free agent with regard to his goings out and his comings in, and, for all his wealth and happiness was, in a sense, a prisoner—Kirjath one day took advantage of an open door to escape into the street. He had not been out for many a long day, and the sensation was new and delightful. The water-spout offered charming facilities for the morning's occupation, and before the horrified attendants had well discovered the monkey's absence he was half-way up towards the roof of the house.

The commotion, when this discovery was made, was tremendous. Young Giddens rushed out of the house and gazed in frenzied excitement at the horrible spectacle—so did Grimby, so did every servant and attendant in the place; for all were interested in a substantial manner in the safety of that little climbing mass of mangy fur and protuberant bones.

Would he safely reach the roof? Even if he did, what would become of him when he got there?

It was an awful moment. Not a word was spoken; strong men scarcely dared to breathe for fear; young Giddens wept like a woman. Crowds of people joined the up-gazing group of frightened friends and made remarks in whispers.

"'Ee'll never do it!" murmured somebody. Giddens groaned.

"What's 'ee stopping for?" asked another awed voice. "Why don't 'ee go on?"

"'Ee'll go on in a shake," said a third—"let 'im rest!"

Kirjath presently began to mount higher once more, and the crowd breathed again. A moment or two later he had gained the rain-pipe, and by a supreme effort had dragged himself over it in safety. A shout of applause from below greeted the success of the courageous climber, and when Kirjath deliberately sat down upon a chimney-pot to rest and gazed around him in perfectly unconcerned enjoyment of the situation, the delight of the spectators reached a pitch which can only be described as enthusiastic.

"Dear me," said a voice, when the shouts of applause had died away; "is that our dear Kirjath, Mr. Giddens? What an extremely perilous position for so precious a life!" It was Mr. Spriggins. Young Giddens paled, but his emotion was too deep for words and he said nothing. Grimby was by, however, and he did the talking.

"Oh, Kirjath's all right," he said, "he's often been up there before; I don't know what the people are so excited about; one would suppose he was the first monkey that ever climbed a spout!"

"Indeed?" said Mr. Spriggins. "Ah! and how do you get him down again, pray?"

"Oh, he gets down all right," said Grimby; "the same way he came, sometimes, and at other times down the chimney—it's just as he feels."

"Down the —," began Mr. Spriggins, and paused, for the behaviour of Kirjath on the roof arrested his and every one's attention. Apparently the monkey felt, on this occasion, like coming down the chimney, for, after walking about inspecting things generally, he had ended by climbing upon the top of the main chimney stack and was at this moment in the act of getting down it, head first.

For a moment he hung by his tail to the rim of the chimney; then he dropped.

An exclamation went up from the crowd, Grimby rushed into the house, followed by young Giddens; the Rev. Mr. Spriggins endeavoured to accompany the pair, but the door was shut in his face and knocked his spectacles off. Mr. Spriggins kicked at the door and rang the bell; I am not sure that he did not use a very unclerical expression of impatience, but the door continued closed and the vituperative cleric remained outside it.

Mr. Spriggins continued kicking and ringing, and he was still employed in this way, when the door opened, and Mr. Grimby appeared.



"STRONG MEN SCARCELY DARED TO BREATHE."

"Dear me!" he said. "Mr. Spriggins, is that you? Anything I can do for you?"

The minister was somewhat abashed. He said he had come to see after Kirjath—"to help to gather up his remains," as he put it. Mr. Spriggins pushed his way in as though he expected that admittance would be refused him. But he was allowed to pass unmolested.

"His remains?" repeated Grimby. "What *do* you mean? You're joking!"

"Oh, no, I'm not!" said the minister. "I want to see that monkey, my good man, alive or dead; and what's more I *intend* to see him! I'm a bigger man than you, and—"

"Won't to-morrow do?" said Grimby, insinuatingly; "you're taking your half-yearly dinner with us then, you know!"

"No, sir, it will *not* do!" said the minister. "I demand to be shown that monkey at once."

"Oh, very well, if you insist upon it," said Grimby, as he escorted the minister forthwith to that apartment which was reserved for Kirjath's own. Here he found young Giddens and two servants busily employed with brushes and damp towels, removing from the coat of what was apparently the quite uninjured Kirjath quantities of soot and dirt with which he appeared to be covered. Indeed, so little hurt did the monkey seem to be, that as soon as the washing was over it showed signs of activity and delight quite surprising in an animal of its advanced age and exalted position. It flew up and down the room, over chairs and tables, over the tops of cupboards and gas brackets, played tunes all over the piano, rushed up the curtains, and eventually took refuge from its persecutors on the very summit of the cornice over the window-curtains, where it sat and jabbered its opinion of people who worry with warm water and brushes.

"Poor old chap!" said Grimby, "he hates being washed!"

"I call that wonderful activity for a monkey of his age!" said Spriggins.

"He always goes on like that when he's been washed," explained Grimby; "doesn't he, Giddens?" Giddens said washing invariably refreshed Kirjath in a wonderful way.

"I should like to see him a bit closer!" said Spriggins.

"Well, then, you'd better catch him," said Giddens. "I can't, after he's had a bath. I never could!"

The minister endeavoured to do so, but failed. He might as well have tried to capture the ray of light flashed by a child from a hand-mirror, and made to dance over the wall. Kirjath was evidently excited by his adventure, or intoxicated by the joy of his bath; he had no idea of being caught; he had not been so active for years. Mr. Spriggins was obliged, in spite of his suspicions, to content himself with the reflection that to-morrow, at dessert, he would have ample opportunity of comparing this monkey with his knowledge of Kirjath's personal appearance.

But when, on the following day, the suspected animal came in to dessert, and was carefully observed and examined by Mr. Spriggins, even the minister's fox-eye could detect no distinctive point in its anatomy which would justify him in asserting in so many words that this was not Kirjath, but another.

One minor circumstance about the monkey's behaviour certainly was noticeable, and at this the Rev. Mr. Spriggins clutched, like a drowning man at a straw. It cracked its nuts in the old way, the natural way, and not by violently seating itself upon them, as of late.

"'Olo, 'ollo, 'ollo!" said the minister, who, in moments of excitement occasionally dispensed with the aspirate. "What's this? He usen't to crack his nuts like that the last time or two; what's the meaning of it?"

Grimby came forward with the explanation. He said that when Kirjath had toothache (from which he occasionally suffered) he preferred to crack his nuts some other way; but, fortunately, his teeth had not bothered him so much of late. And with this explanation the minister was obliged to rest contented.

Kirjath, or his representative, now took a new lease of life, and had a very pleasant time of it; he lived, as usual, upon the



"WAS CAREFULLY OBSERVED BY
MR. SPRIGGINS."

fat of the land, and was extremely well satisfied with his lot. So much so, that when the Rev. Mr. Spriggins one day introduced a certain eminent and learned professor into the house, one who had devoted much talent and labour to the study of the language of the monkeys, and when this gentleman, at Spriggins's instigation and unknown to young Giddens, engaged our small friend in conversation, Kirjath Jearim the Second did not give himself away, or let out any secrets of any kind; on the contrary, he used—Professor Garner is understood to have declared—the most shocking language, and bade him (the pro-



"THAT WONDERFUL ANIMAL."

fessor) mind his own business, and not interfere in matters which did not concern him.

So things went on as usual; and so—sooth to tell—they remain to this day; Clapton and Fox are both dead, and their share of the spoil has reverted to the main estate; Spriggins is very old now, and blind; he cannot identify the monkey so well as he used, and is beginning to fear that Kirjath, who enjoys perennial youth, will outlive him after all. Nevertheless, he enjoys his six-monthly dinner at the estate's expense, and on these festive occasions he drinks a good deal of port wine. Some say he is now a partner in the concern, and enjoys a substantial annuity in consideration of his blindness—and dis-

cretion. However this may be, he is resigned to his lot, though the authorities up at Hezekiah complain bitterly of the vitality and toughness of Kirjath.

Nothing seems to affect that wonderful animal, and he comes up smiling after every attack of sickness. Age does not stale him, and he seems to grow younger every day. Giddens and Grimby deserve their good fortune, for they certainly take the greatest possible trouble to keep their ward from every touch of ill. They understand him so very well, you see, by this time! And if a handful of small bones stick blackening somewhere up the chimney, and if—in a distant corner of the garden, among the laurels—three little graves tell of three happy little lives ended, what does it matter to them or to anyone if all are happy and contented, and if there is still a bright and merry Kirjath in the house to justify the yearly dollars, and to rejoice their hearts with his graceful and pretty ways? *Beati possidentes!* Such is life.





DR. DOYLE IN THE CHAIR.

A Chat with Conan Doyle.

BY AN "IDLER" INTERVIEWER.

(Photographs by Messrs. Fradelle and Young.)

IN the very beginning I wish to set down the fact that I am not a professional interviewer, but that I have some acquaintance with the principles of the art. The observant reader will notice that I understand the business because I have managed to run in five capital "I's" in the first few lines of this article. There you have the whole secret of interviewing as practised A.D. 1894 in England. The successful interviewer blazons forth as much of his own personality as possible; using his victim as a peg on which to hang his own opinions. If the interviewer could be induced to hang himself as well as his opinions the world would be brighter and better.

But the interview in England is an imported article; it is not native to the soil. In America you get the real thing, and even the youngest newspaper man there understands how it should be done. An interviewer should be like a clear sheet of plate glass that forms the front window of an attractive shop, through which you can see the articles displayed, scarcely suspecting that anything stands between you and the interesting collection.

To show the practical difficulties that meet an interviewer at the very outset, here was a victim who absolutely refused to be interviewed.

"What has the public to do with an author's personality?"



"SHERLOCK HOLMES."

(From a bust by Mr. Wilkins, of Birmingham.)

he asked. "I vowed more than two years ago that I would never see an interviewer again."

"But you are going to America——"

"Ah, in America it is a different thing. One should adapt one's self to the ways of a country."

"But apart from personality, suppose we chat about literature."

"Well, let us stick to literature then."



DR. DOYLE AT WORK.

I pulled out my note-book and pencil, and, looking across at my victim, solemnly said—

"Now, Conan Doyle, talk."

Instead of complying with my most reasonable request the novelist threw back his head and laughed, and, impressed as I was with the momentousness of the occasion, so hearty and infectious is his laugh, that after a few moments I was compelled to join him.

We had looted two comfortable wicker chairs from the house, and were seated at the farther end of the long lawn that stretches

from the Doyle residence towards the city of London. It is one of those smooth, exceedingly green, velvety lawns to be found only in England, yet so easy of manufacture, for, as the Oxford gardener said to the American visitor, all you have to do is to leave the lawn outdoors for five hundred years or so, cutting and rolling it frequently, and there you are. Little white hard rubber golf balls lay about on the grass like croquet balls that had shrunk from exposure to the weather. Mr. Doyle is a golf inebriate, and practises on this lawn, landing the balls in a tub when he makes the right sort of a hit, and generally breaking a window when he doesn't.

I put away my note-book and pencil.

"I have a proposal to make," I said. "You and I have frequently set the world right and solved all the problems with no magazine editor to make us afraid. We have talked in your garden and in mine, at your hospitable board and at mine, at your club and at mine, on your golf ground and—yes, I remember now, I haven't one of my own; now I know your views on things pretty well, so I will 'fake' an interview, as we say in the States."

"But that wouldn't be quite fair to the readers of *THE IDLER*, would it?" objected Doyle, who is an honest man, and who has never had the advantage of a newspaper training.

"Quite fair, I should think. They would get your opinions on things, which is the main point. Your opinion and mine are always the opposite of each other. All I would have to do would be to remember what I thought on any subject, then write something entirely different, and I would have Conan Doyle. No literary man ever agrees with any other literary man. He sometimes pretends to like the books another fellow has written, but that is all humbug. He doesn't in his heart; he knows he could have done them better himself."

"Oh, you're all wrong there, all wrong—entirely wrong. Now, if I had to choose my critics I would choose my fellow workers or school-boys."

"Just what I said. You are placing the other authors on a level with school-boys! That is worse than——"

"Listen to me. A fellow author knows the difficulties I have to contend with; he appreciates the effect I am trying to attain; his criticism, even if severe, would be helpful and intelligent."

"A school-boy, on the other hand, seems to give his verdict on a book by intuition, but he rarely makes a mistake. See how

the school-boys of the world have made 'Treasure Island' their own. Of course I would not expect an accurate estimate of 'Robert Elsmere' from a school-boy."

"I suppose an author would hardly like to slate another author's work—publicly. Besides, he would be compelled, as a matter of self-protection, to keep up the pretence that there is such a thing as literature in England at the present moment. But there is Mr. Howells, who has no English axe to grind, and he, from the calm, serene, unprejudiced atmosphere of New York, frankly admits that literature in England is a thing of the past, and that the authors of to-day do not understand even the rudiments of their business. Of course you agree with him?"

"I think there never was a time when there was a better promise. There are at least a dozen men and women who have made a deep mark and who are still young. No one can say how far they may go. Some of them are sure to develop, for the past shows us that fiction is an art which improves up to the age of fifty or so. With fuller knowledge of life comes greater power in describing it."

"A dozen! You always were a generous man, Doyle. Who are the talented twelve, so that I may cable to Howells?"

"There are more than a dozen. Barrie, Kipling, Mrs. Olive Schreiner, Sarah Grand, Miss Harraden, Gilbert Parker, Quiller-Couch, Hall Caine, Stanley Weyman, Anthony Hope, Rider Haggard, Crockett, Jerome, Zangwill, Clark Russell, George Moore—many of them under thirty and few of them much over it. There are others of course. These names just happen to occur to me."

"You think a man improves up to fifty?"

"Certainly, if he keeps out of a groove and refuses to do his work in a mechanical way. Why, many of the greatest writers in our fiction did not begin until after forty. Thackeray was about forty. Scott was past forty. Charles Reade and George Eliot were as much. Richardson was fifty. To draw life one must know it."

"My experience is that when a man is fifty he knows he will improve until he is sixty, and when he is sixty he feels that improvement will keep right on until he is seventy; whereas when he is twenty he *thinks* that perhaps he will know more when he is thirty, but is not sure. Man is an amusing animal. Now I would like an American dozen, if you don't mind."

"I have not read a book for a long time that has stirred me



DR. DOYLE'S HOUSE AT NORWOOD.

as much as Miss Wilkins' 'Pembroke.' I think she is a very great writer. It is always risky to call a recent book a classic, but this one really seems to me to have every characteristic of one."

"Well?"

"Well!"

"That is only one. Don't you read American fiction?"

"Not as much as I should wish, but what I have read has, I hope, been fairly representative. I know Cable's work, and Eugene Field's, and Hamlin Garland's, and Edgar Fawcett's, and Richard Harding Davis'. I think Harold Frederic's 'In the Valley' is one of the best of recent historical romances. The danger for American fiction is, I think, that it should run in



SKULL OF POLAR BEAR, AND ICELAND FALCON SHOT BY DR. DOYLE.

many brooks instead of one broad stream. There is a tendency to over-accentuate local peculiarities; differences after all are very superficial things, and good old human nature is always there under a coat of varnish. When one hears of a literature of the West, or of the South, it sounds aggressively sectional."

"Sectional? If it comes to that who could be more sec-

tional than Hardy or Barrie?—the one giving us the literature of a county and the other of a village. You know that a person in a neighbouring village said of Barrie that ‘he was no sae bad fur a Kerrimuer man.’ When you speak of a section in America you must not forget it may be a bit of land as big as France.”



IN THE GARDEN.

“Barrie and Hardy have gained success by showing how the Scotch or Wessex peasant shares our common human nature, not by accentuating the points in which they differ from us.”

“Well, I think Howells is demolished. What do you think of him and of James?”

"James, I think, has had a great and permanent influence upon fiction. His beautiful clear-cut style and his artistic restraint must affect everyone who reads him. I'm sure his 'Portrait of a Lady' was an education to me—though one has not always the wit to profit by one's education."

"Yes, James is a writer of whom English people ought to be proud. What a pity it is there is no American like him. Still, thank goodness, they have William Dean Howells over there. I love Howells so much that I feel sure you must have something to say against him; what is it?"

"I admire his honest earnest work, but I do not admire his attitude towards all writers and critics who happen to differ from his school. One can like Valdes and Bourget and Miss Austen without throwing stones at Scott and Thackeray and Dickens. There is plenty of room for all."

"But there is the question of art."

"We talk so much about art that we tend to forget what this art was ever invented for. It was to amuse mankind—to help the sick and the dull and the weary. If Scott and Dickens have done this for millions they have done well by their art."

"You don't think, then, that the object of all fiction is to draw life as it is?"

"Where would Gulliver and Don Quixote and Dante and Goethe be if that were so? No; the object of fiction is to interest, and the best fiction is that which interests most. If you can interest by drawing life as it is, by all means do so. But there is no reason why you should object to your neighbour using other means."

"You do not approve of the theological novel, then?"

"Oh, yes, I do, if it is made interesting. I think the age of fiction is coming—the age when religious and social and political changes will all be effected by means of a novelist. Look within recent years how much has been done by such books as 'Looking Backward,' or 'Robert Elsmere.' Everybody is educated now, but comparatively few are very educated. To get an idea to penetrate to the masses of the people you must put fiction round it, like sugar round a pill. No statesman and no ecclesiastic will have more influence on public opinion than the novelist of the future will have. If he has strong convictions he will have wonderful facilities for impressing them on others. Still, his first business will always be to

interest. If he can't get his sugar right people will refuse his pill."

At this point nature revolted. She thought the subject too dry and she proceeded to wet it down. A black thunder cloud came up over the Crystal Palace, and the first thing we knew the shower was upon us. Both of us luckily knew enough to come in out of the rain. Two men hastily grasped two wicker chairs and bolted for the house, leaving literature to take care of itself in the back garden.

Conan Doyle's study, workshop, and smoking-room is a nice place in a downpour, and I can recommend the novelist's brand of cigarettes. Show me the room in which a man works and I'll show you—how to smoke his cigarettes.

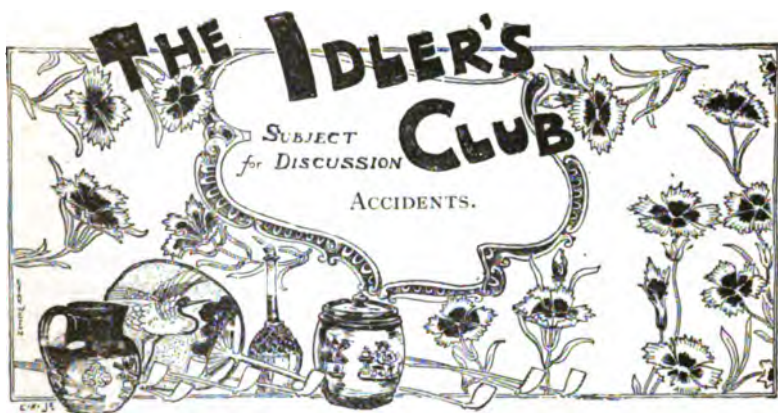


"SHERLOCK HOLMES."

A Sunday Driver.

BY FRANK FELLER.





BY BARRY PAIN, "THE GENTLEMAN GIPSY," E. S. GREW,
BENNETT COLL, BAYNTON BOYLE, AND FRANCIS GRIBBLE.

There are really two sorts of accidents, the happy accident and the unfortunate accident; the latter is the kind that happens. If, as is more often the case, the unfortunate accident keeps clear of tragedy, it gives a great deal of pleasure to those who witness it. How few of us when we break our boot-laces, miss our trains, put the wrong end of the cigar in our mouths, lose our punt-pole, spill our ink, get stung by wasps, mistake our host for his butler, sit on our hats, or suffer from any of those thousands of similar things that do so much to make life eventful—how few of us, I say, on such occasions reflect that what we suffer is nothing to what the spectators enjoy. If we were not wholly selfish, we should feel grateful that we had contributed to the general gaiety. But do we? I fear not. Yet even on selfish grounds it would be better if we did. One of the first steps towards dignity is to frankly accept the situation when one is ridiculous. To enjoy one's own accident, even if it does not absolutely destroy the pleasure that it gives to others, yet takes from it much of its sting for one's self.

Barry Pain generalises.

* * * *

I once happened in the crowded street of a provincial town to see a small boy going to school. He was in a hurry; from the expression of his face one could see that he had three minutes and a-half to do it in, and would have preferred five. He wore a straw hat, knicker-

And particularises.

bockers, and other things. Under his arm was a pile of books. The wind was blowing hard, and as he ran along he held his head down to prevent the hat blowing off. But as he was holding his head down, he could not see precisely where he was running, so he ran into a lamp-post. His hat went off, his school-books distributed themselves along the pavement with a sort of happy carelessness. For one second he stood with a look of pained surprise on his face, and then proceeded to collect his possessions in frantic haste. The faces of everybody in the street lit up and brightened; I myself was glad I had come. Some of the passers-by managed to laugh walking, but most of them stopped so as to get it done more easily. A policeman laughed. It was the first time that I had seen a policeman laugh, and it is, I believe, the only historical instance. There was still a chance that the boy might be in time for school; gathering his books together, and holding his hat on, he dashed off at top speed, ran straight into a second lamp-post, and had precisely the same accident again. In the second that followed I could see middle-aged people making up their minds how they would tell the story when they got home. It was the moment of intense, complete joy that comes before the burst of helpless and hopeless laughter. But in that same second the boy had realised that he could never, by any possible chance, be in time for school now; he saw the beauty of a full acceptance of the situation. Before the laughter of us could begin, he himself commenced to laugh—spontaneously and heartily. It spoiled all. We chuckled in a feeble and sickly way, and by his laughter the boy had snatched from us the entertainment which by his glorious accident he had provided. It would not be possible to say, in telling the story, “if you could only have seen the agonised and bewildered expression on that boy’s face.” And we had all of us intended to say just that. He gathered up his hat and books and went on. He was late for school, and would be punished for it. He must have hurt himself. He had damaged his books in a way that would mean money out of his pocket when he came to sell them at the second-hand shop to tide over some financial crisis. But he had rescued his dignity, risen superior to the whole street, saved himself from being ridiculous by the simple expedient of being the first to realise that he really was ridiculous.

* * * *

“The Gentleman Gipsy” speaks. Ever have a caravan accident? Well, during my ten years of cruising as a gentleman gip, I’ve had many a minor mishap, and many a narrow shave, but I can safely say I’ve never had a fatal accident. You see my van, “The Wanderer,” is nearly 20 feet long, and 6 ft. 7 in. breadth of beam. Weight, about two tons. It takes two big horses to trot her along. I’ve travelled across the Grampian Mountains in her and through the

wildest passes in Scotland, clambering up hills to which my nags had to cling by their cart-chains—apparently. Except in the far lone Hielands the roads in Scotland are good, many being military. You zig-zag or circumnavigate the mountains, whereas even in Durham and Northumberland, the hills not being very high, the path goes straight across. Even in England, however, you come to ugly descents and pitches where you least expect them. Just past Earl Percy's Castle at Alnwick, for example, I nearly came to grief in a ravine. The worst hills, on this side the Tweed, I have found in Derby, Surrey, some parts of Kent, Lancashire, and the Forest of Dean. In the latter they are truly awful! Our route took us from Westbury-on-Severn through Cinderford, away to Lydbury on the Wye. Our highest recorded hill in England was between Staley Bridge and Huddersfield. Four miles to the top, which is 1,800 feet above the sea level. Time, two hours and ten minutes. We have a powerful brake, locking-chain, and skid, and a roller, and we need them all. I've had my break give out on a hill, when no chain or skid was on, and frequently my skid has been carried away.

* * * *

To get into a ditch with only one wheel, in a caravan so large, might mean a week on your beam ends. But I always have horses that neither jib nor shy, and are not even afraid of a steam roller. Once I got nearly thrown over an embankment among the Surrey Hills. We were turning a sharp corner when the reins caught in the curtain rods and pulled the horses round in a circle. My closest shave was in the Grampians, when a horse we met in a dog-cart shied and backed against our pole. It was touch and go for ten terribly long seconds, our horses plunging, and a ravine to the left four hundred feet deep. The horses and van were all but over.

* * * *

I carry a capital road book, and cycling maps for every county, and also two revolvers and a Newfoundland dog. One night a revolver did me good service; I smile now when I remember how coolly my little girl handed me down the deadly weapon. Had it been an egg-spoon she couldn't have exhibited greater *sang froid*. "Here, pa," she said, "the nasty men want shootin' ever so much." Minor mishaps are of constant occurrence but they don't spoil our enjoyment. If a tire comes off there is generally a blacksmith handy; if we smash our lamps they can be renewed; and if a carriage runs into us our two-tonner doesn't come to grief, but the other fellow does. Narrow country lanes are awkward, especially if we meet a cart of hay

or a load of sticks. We met a magistrate in his carriage once in a narrow lane. It was *his* duty to go back, being the lightest. He wouldn't at first, so I ordered the nose-bags to be put on and lay down to read my Shakespeare. I was provisioned for a fortnight, so after one hour's solid swearing at me, the magistrate raised the siege.

* * * *

Variations in paving.

Three times have I driven straight through London from Lewisham to Epping Forest. It was the variations in paving that puzzled us most, miles of macadam, stretches of broken metal, long streets of boulders, and furlongs of slippery wood or greasy asphalt. How delightful to get clear away from all this, and see the trees nodding green above our heads once more. We had two slight accidents near Islington on the same day. In the first we crossed the hawse of a tram-car and had our after curtains carried away. The tram-driver's remarks were mostly interjectional. Soon after a 'bus drove in sight. We came up with him hand over hand, and were soon close astern. So close that when the beggar suddenly lay to, we ranmed him. We cut the conductor right into his 'bus. No, he wasn't killed; he emerged almost immediately again, put strange questions to my coachman, and said dreadful things to me. But, bar little accidents, my gipsy life is quite idyllic.

* * * *

Grew takes a new view of things.

A new view of things was presented to me the other day by my friend Marriot, in a pause occasioned by the violent collision of our omnibus with a street lamp. "Some people," observed Marriot, while waiting for the horses to get up off his hat, "would call this an accident; but they are the people whose lives begin and continue in the ordinary way, and who look on every divagation as an accident. But in my case things are reversed. Being," he continued, deprecatingly moulding his hat into shape on the top of the lamp, "the youngest of a family of fourteen, I cannot consider my birth as an act of calculated foresight. My name of Edwin is a mistake due to the deafness of the clergyman, for I ought to have been called Edward, after my uncle. It was the purest chance that my father, whose absent mind could seldom distinguish his own children from those of my uncle (who lived with us), had me sent to school. And," Marriot added, pensively smoothing his hat on the horse's mane, "I only married to avoid a breach of promise case. You will see therefore that these little occurrences (he was pinning up the rent in his trousers as he spoke) represent to me the ordinary course of life, while such a thing as dinner (I fancied there was

a trace of melancholy in his tone) would be to me a pure, I might almost say, an exciting accident."

* * * *

Marriot's eventful career reminded me of another of which I heard when once I was one of the forlorn Invalids' Row that occupies the lee side of an Atlantic liner during the first days out. I was listening to the two men who were tucked up in the deck-chairs next to mine. "She must have borne a charmed life," said the man who was not very ill to the man who was. "Ah," responded the other, "she was a little lady! Did she shoot Robinson?" "No," said the first man; "he tried to poison her, so she shot one of his friends." The man who was ill looked drearily at the slated horizon dipping and rising as we rolled. "Was that Vavasour?" he asked presently, just to keep the conversation alive. "I think Vavasour was the man she was out in a small boat with when she pulled out the plug and swam ashore," said his friend. "That was *before* his cousin divorced her. Or was it after she had got him seven years for arson?" The other man did not reply for a long time, and then he had forgotten. "Did she—?" he began, and then he went below. I myself didn't care much what became of her—or of me—just then; but a day or so later, when I got to know my neighbours, I asked one of them concerning the little lady's subsequent career. "Oh, it was very odd," said my interlocutor. "She died quite by an accident—eating clotted cream." "What?" "Yes; she was very fond of it, and swallowed a whole tablespoonful at a gulp one day. It made her ill—you understand what I mean?" I did perfectly. "And she went and broke a blood vessel. She was a dandy, she was, I tell you, sir."

* * * *

If anybody desires to realise how faithfully the dictionary carries out its mission of darkening knowledge, let him ponder the following definition: "Accident, an event which proceeds from an unknown cause." In only one instance, that I can think of, is this true. It is the case of the man who tells the truth by accident; for the cause of his deviation from strict consistency is certainly unknown, either to himself or his startled auditors. The definition, however, will not satisfy the gentleman whose legs, in "Some wee short hour ayont the twal," persist in wreathing themselves into knots—by no means to their own undoing. The thing is an accident, but the cause is not unknown. The mischance is due, as everybody understands, to salmon. Neither will it satisfy the man who, in the rapture of recognising a long-lost friend, brings his hand down with a bang upon the ample

Bennett Coll thinks accidents proceed from known causes.

back of a total stranger. This is a most deplorable accident; but its cause is to be found in the idiotic resemblance (from the rear) between the smitten one and the smiter's old chum. Indeed, it would be easy to multiply such instances to almost any extent. All railway accidents, street accidents, accidents at sea, grammar accidents, and other casualties may be satisfactorily explained in the same way.

* * * *

The fact is, an accident (if derivation counts for And are destined: anything) is an event which falls in your direction—nothing more. Not *happens* to fall, you observe; because the propelling force at the back is *Kismet*, whose vagaries surprise no philosophic mind. For instance, when you take a hand at whist and find thirteen trumps in your possession (you *not* being the dealer), you know at once that it was *Kismet* who really shuffled the pack. The resulting accident may be confidently expected in such a case; and, like the trumps, it will surely fall in your direction. The same uncontrollable impulse will force you to appropriate the pick of the umbrellas in the hall—especially if you are in a hurry; to secure the corner seat in a railway carriage which is already occupied by a hand-bag; to turn up at a friend's house in time for the dinner to which you have not been invited, and to see some other fellow's girl home afterwards. All these things are accidents, and quite unpremeditated on your part; otherwise there would be no use for apologies. But you are not to blame. The real culprit is *Kismet*.

* * * *

He reasons why
this is so.

Trace this principle a little further. It is by pure accident that I am myself and not somebody else. The same thing is true of you. Suppose that, in the old sweethearting days of our respected parents, there had been some little coolness which grew into a frost—some lover's tiff which became a quarrel not to be healed—*who should we be now?* Should we be still wandering about space, waiting for a suitable body to turn up? You see, it was all a toss-up in any case; our very birth was the merest accident in the world. And what is the consequence? Why this; **THE IDLER** itself is but the accident of an accident. It was brought into being in order that I might air my views in it. The truth of this fact is not destroyed by the other fact that there are a few thousands of other contributors, who can put in the same plea. That also is an accident. *Kismet* kindly inoculated us all with the disease which Cicero calls the scribbling-itch, and this is why **THE IDLER** is calculated to meet a felt want. It is true that the editors weep perpetually because they cannot find

room for so much talent, but any man who sends up his MS. may surely consider himself a contributor—whatever happens. The accident occurs when the thing comes back again. Resulting accidents from known causes are the rule and not the exception. This is a cheerful reflection for the man who finds himself upside-down after planting his foot upon a piece of orange peel. It should also solace those who backed the field against the last Derby favourite on account of his swollen hock. It should be the latest recollection of the anarchical student of chemistry before he distributes himself in portable fragments around his immediate neighbourhood. And it should teach us all to refrain from playing football with lighted paraffin lamps, unless we are in favour of cremation. Next, please.

* * * *

Well, for my part, as regards accidents, the most trivial often make the deepest impression on one's memory. In the days when all the world was young, I ultimately arrived at a certain well-known eastern city equally celebrated for the picturesqueness of its palaces and the variety of its offensive odours; in fact, it had more than twice the "forty-four well-defined and separate stinks," once attributed to the ancient city of Cologne. I was young, giddy, and somewhat forlorn, for on the previous evening I had met the only woman I could ever love. It afterwards transpired that she was forty-eight to my eighteen, but the impulsiveness of youth is apt to overlook trivial details of this kind. The evening was cold, wet, muggy. Just before dinner I sat alone in the deserted hotel, ruefully wondering how I was to dine by myself in that vast, dimly illuminated room, with its little oasis of white table shining out from the darkness. At that instant a truculently attired official who seemed to me an executioner from out of the "Arabian Nights," entered the room, and, with a salaam expressive of Oriental humility, laid a letter at my feet, which I was almost afraid to stoop and pick up lest it should be a device to enable him to decapitate me with convenience and despatch. However, it proved to be an invitation to dine with the lady I admired and her brother. She said that in the East, owing to the ravages of cholera, the prevalence of midnight assassination, and a few other little unpleasantnesses scarcely worth mentioning, it was not the custom to send out long and formal invitations. The note also stated that the party would consist of the Armenian Patriarch and a few other distinguished individuals who were "passing through." The messenger further informed me that the house of my hostess was only about three hundred yards away, and then departed with my somewhat flurried acceptance of the invitation.

Baynton Boyle
travels.

On going to my room I found that my dress suit
And meets with an still survived the vicissitudes of Eastern travel.
accident.

Most of my white ties had lain for a couple of days
at the bottom of the Tigris, but, fortunately, the box
was waterproof and they were all right. My dress pumps, with
pointed toes, retained their immaculate shininess, and nothing
had marred the splendour of a pair of black silk socks with
yellow dots. I had confidence in those socks as the one spot
of Oriental colouring in my costume. Though I could not
appeal to the distinguished personages I was to meet with a
display of intellectual brilliancy at one end of me, if we once
proceeded to the other extremity I was tolerably safe. It was
a miserably dark night ; there was not a light to be seen ; every-
body had gone to bed, although it was only seven o'clock, in
order to avoid robbery or assassination. Getting minute in-
structions as to my route from the hall porter at the entrance,
I somewhat timorously sallied forth. "Keep straight along the
street," said the hall porter, "and cross it about one hundred
yards lower down. If Allah is with you, you will find a door
opposite."

* * * *

Apparently Allah was not with me, for I was
Of a distressing nature. unable to find anything in the pitchy darkness,
and at last determined to cross the narrow
street and feel along what I took to be a blank
wall opposite. Carefully tucking up my trousers, I at-
tempted to cross the street and, at the first step, went up to
my knees in a deep pool of liquid mud which, as I afterwards
found, in a fit of zeal and a desire to do honour to the Armenian
Patriarch, the Municipal authorities had swept up. When I
emerged from the struggle and gained the other side of the
street, I was minus one shoe ; one sock had departed from me
for ever ; the other shoe was full of mud ; I resembled a dis-
reputable London crossing-sweeper far more than a man who
had looked forward to dining with the Patriarch. As I leant
against the wall bitterly bemoaning my fate, my fingers touched
a bell-handle, a great, barred iron gate swung open, and I found
myself in a spacious courtyard, brilliantly lit with lanterns and
thronged with retainers of the different guests, one of whom,
recognising my plight, insisted on carrying me upstairs on his
back. Fortunately my hostess's brother appeared on the scene
at this moment, and I explained to him my predicament. "I'll
tell you what we'd better do," he said. "At this hour
there's not another pair of dress shoes to be had for love or
money. You shoot a little, don't you ?" I admitted I did.
"Very well then," said he, "nothing is easier. We'll just have
this shoe cleaned, wrap your leg in a bandage, and explain that
you're a mighty hunter whose leg has been ripped up by a wild

boar. I would lend you my own shoes only I haven't another pair here." With a moral turpitude which did not astonish my host-in the least, I yielded to his insidious proposal, and was carried into the drawing-room with so much state as to attract the attention of His Holiness, the Armenian Patriarch, who devoted most of his time to making me comfortable and learning English at my expense. The unfortunate part of this accident was that I was unable to see much of my hostess, as I dared not move about for fear of betraying myself, and she was so surrounded by guests that it was impossible for her to be conscious of my presence. It was the longest and dullest evening I had ever passed; but I was amply repaid for it by the look of amazement on the Armenian Patriarch's face when he met me gaily walking down the same street two days afterwards. "You English are a wonderful nation," he said; "even the smallest of you are Rustems."

* * * *

Accidents, when you come to think of them, are very remarkable things. For accidents alone among the multifarious phenomena of human life are able to trample on the law of averages, and set the doctrine of chances in defiance. In this way. Fatal cases of accident are rare, far fewer than, for example, fatal cases of influenza. Yet, on the other hand, you hardly ever meet a man who has not, at least once in his life, found himself in a position in which it would have seemed reasonable to lay odds upon his death. That is to say—to keep up the sporting phraseology—a vast majority of the human race have, in this one department of life, never failed to win a wager, in which the odds were at least ten to one against them.

* * * *

The singularity of the circumstances struck me very forcibly one day when a number of men were telling stories of adventures in the smoking-room of a certain club of which I am a member. Every man in that room was, by profession, a man of peace. Yet, by the law of averages to which I have just referred, at least ninety per cent. of them ought to have been long since in their graves. One gentleman had been chased by a French mob in Villetta, and had only been saved by the chance—obviously a remote one—that he was able to run faster than the fleetest of his pursuers. Another had slithered down an ice-slope in the Alps, and only avoided tumbling over a precipice by the accident—even more remote—of cannoning against a bit of rock that happened to be sticking up in the middle of it. A third had even been prevented by the sudden death of a relative

Gribble philosophises on accidents.

With illustrations from his friends' accidents.

from sailing for America in a vessel which was lost with all hands. A fourth would have been drowned if he had not been a better swimmer than 999 men out of 1,000. A fifth had been obliged to fight a duel, and been hit on the lobe of the left ear. What had happened to the others I have forgotten; but they had all been through adventures which ought, by the law of averages, to have been fatal; and they all survived to talk about these adventures in the smoking-room. This is certainly a remarkable phenomenon. It is none the less remarkable because it never fails to repeat itself in any company in which the subject of accidents is started.

* * * *

And his own. There is a temptation, when listening to such stories, to make some allowance for the desire of the victims of the accidents to shine in conversation. My own experience, however, forbids me to do anything of the kind. In the ordinary affairs of life I am no more lucky than my neighbours. I have never won a prize in a lottery, or drawn a possible share in a sweepstake. Yet, in the matter of accidents I have, through no virtue of my own, more than once got the better of the odds. On one occasion I walked, in perfect ignorance, across a quicksand. At the moment when I traversed it, of course, it was not a quicksand; but it became a quicksand, as I was subsequently informed at my hotel at Burch-sur-Mer, about ten minutes after I left it to come home to dinner. On another occasion an Italian ruffian, who had robbed me, stood over me, with the muzzle of a loaded gun pointed at the pit of my stomach. Why he neglected to pull the trigger I cannot, to this hour, understand. The murder would never, in all human probability, have been discovered, whereas, if he let me go, he ran a great risk of being caught and sent to prison for twenty years.

* * * *

Especially his own. Those were two of my accidents. The other two were tumbles in the Alps. On each of these occasions I slipped while going down a steep slope. On each occasion I scraped much of the skin off my hands in trying to stop myself; and on each occasion I managed to pull up just on the verge of a drop of about fifty feet. It seems to me, looking back upon the matter calmly, that the odds must have been about 10 to 1 against the single, or 100 to 1 against the double event. These are heavy odds, but they are the merest bagatelle to the odds that have been pulled off by many other men I know. I can only infer that, by some subtle decrees of Providence, the laws of nature, and the doctrine of chances, are in abeyance where accidents are concerned.

People I Have Never Met.

By SCOTT RANKIN.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA.

"G. A. S."—TRIC (K).



"It is well known that if G. A. S. has one weakness, it is that of taking a great interest in things eatable and drinkable."



BY W. L. ALDEN.

EVEN the youngest of us can remember the dreary days when it was an accepted canon of English literature that a novel should deal wholly with character-painting, and should never be sullied with incident. All our cleverest writers wrote stories in which nothing ever happened, and we all agreed that this was true art. Nevertheless there is not the slightest doubt that we had a secret hankering for incident, and refrained from acknowledging it only because we had been taught that incident was "low," and that those nearly obsolete novelists, Fielding, and Marryat, and Cooper, indulged in incident merely because they were incapable of anything higher. When Mr. Stevenson wrote *Treasure Island*, a story overflowing with incidents of the most exciting character, we enjoyed it immensely, but we excused the writer and ourselves on the ground that, after all, the book was only a boy's book. But then came Dr. Conan Doyle with his *Micah Clarke*. Here was a novel where bloody battles, hair-breadth escapes, and all sorts of wild and delicious adventures were strewn with amazing prodigality. No one could deny that it was a novel, for it followed the traditions of *Waverley*, *Rob Roy*, and *Old Mortality*, and even the warmest admirers of the novel in which nothing happened was compelled to admit that Scott was a novelist. *Micah Clarke* met with such immediate and wide approval that the oppressed novel-reading public mustered courage to rise in insurrection, and to demand that henceforth its novels should be novels of incident. Since then the novel that confines itself to the analysis of

character, or to the promulgation of religious and moral fads, has been relegated, on this side of the Atlantic at least, to women writers. Our masculine story-writers, Kipling, and Doyle, and Weyman, and Quiller-Couch, and the rest of them, can draw character as skilfully as the best of the men of the analytic school, but they can also invent incidents in limitless profusion; and when we sit down to read their books we know that our cheeks are to be fanned by the strong, fresh breeze of adventure, and not sallowed by the wearisome toil and profitless trouble of the spiritual dissecting room. To Dr. Doyle, more than to any other man, we owe this return to honest storytelling, and in future years, when we have rediscovered Marryat and Cooper, and when even the women have ceased to write bad theology and to discuss their more obscure emotions, the public will raise a monument to Conan Doyle as the reviver of the British novel.

* * * *

Is there any reader of THE IDLER who has forgotten the delightful composite photographs which appeared in several of the earlier numbers of the magazine? I remember one especially, which was compounded of Mr. Gladstone, Lord Salisbury, Mr. Balfour, and Sir William Harcourt, in which Sir William's face, after the manner of Aaron's rod, swallowed up all the other faces, so that the resulting photograph was merely a portrait of Sir William Harcourt wearing Mr. Gladstone's shirt collar. Why should we not have composite novels as well as composite photographs. If we could cut out from half-a-dozen novels the best drawn characters of each, and dovetail together incidents from all of them, the result would certainly be interesting. For example, suppose we eliminate from the *Naulahka* that tiresome person "Tarvin," with his constant and irritating talk about "the three C's coming to Topaz," and substitute in his place Stevenson's "Captain Nares." Suppose too, that instead of "Kate," with her imaginary mission, which she abandons as recklessly as she entered upon it, we should take Barrie's "Egyptian," and then add, say, "Mulvaney," and "Mrs. Hauksbee." Would not the resulting mixture, if carefully combined, be far superior to the *Naulahka*, the *Wrecker*, the *Little Minister*, and any one of the *Plain Tales from the Hills*? Perhaps you will say that this substitution of one character for another is very different from the blending process which characterises the composite photograph. Very well! Let us blend our characters. Would not a combination of "Tess," "Trilby," and "Esther Waters," give us a type that would be truer to life than any one of the portraits of the three young women as drawn by their authors? The combined "Tess-Trilby-Esther" might not be as attractive as either "Tess" or "Trilby," nor

as worthy of respect as "Esther," but she would certainly be more possible than either of them. There are possibilities in the idea of composite novels, and the American pirate, whose profession has been somewhat interfered with by the international copyright law, might grow prosperous once more by manufacturing composite novels, without incurring the penalty of literary piracy.

* * * *

Mr. Stevenson has, consciously or unconsciously, produced a series of composite characters in his *Ebb Tide*. It is an extremely attenuated story as far as plot is concerned. Three worthless vagabonds conspire to steal a schooner, and afterwards to steal a small cargo of pearls. One of them is shot in the course of the latter attempt, and thereupon the story ceases rather than ends, for strictly speaking it has neither beginning nor end. Mr. Stevenson is said to have called it a "brutal" story. It is certainly a powerful one, perhaps the most powerful story that Mr. Stevenson has yet written, but its interest consists almost wholly in the four men, whose characters the author has painted so vividly. Of these the captain of the schooner is simply "Captain Wicks," of the *Wrecker*, superimposed upon "Captain Nares" of the same story, with the result that the outlines are a little blurred. Then again the mate of the schooner is "Carthew," the mate of the *Wrecker*, softened and weakened, doubtless by the use of a different literary "developer." As for the pearl-fisher, the reader feels that Mr. Stevenson had not quite made up his mind as to the man's true character, and he is, therefore, somewhat unsatisfactory. It is in the vicious, murderous little cockney, "Huish," that the author has made his greatest success. Nothing could be stronger, more subtle, and in every way finer than the portrait of this wretch. It may not be an agreeable subject of contemplation, which is probably what Mr. Stevenson had in mind when he said that the story was a brutal one, but of its wonderful power and truth there cannot be the slightest question. The *Ebb Tide* reads as if it was written before the *Wrecker*, and thrown aside because there was not enough in it to make a coherent and rounded story. After the success of the *Wrecker*, Mr. Stevenson may have been tempted to finish the *Ebb Tide*, for which the public will certainly be grateful. In spite of its slightness of construction, I am inclined to think that it will live longer than the *Wrecker*. Certainly there is nothing in the *Wrecker* that will compare with the portrait of "Huish," and we shall remember the little wretch and his death scene long after those adventurous schooners, the "Currency Lass" and the "Norah Creina," with their crews, have sailed over the edge of the world into oblivion.

The God in the Car, Mr. Anthony Hope's new novel, is full of wit and brilliant epigram. It suggests to us what Lord Beaconsfield might have accomplished had he ceased to waste his powers on statesmanship, and become a professional instead of an amateur novelist. Mr. Hope's story is eminently up to date. His central figure is the typical pioneer of British Colonial Empire in the year 1894. He is the sort of man who can organise a company, sell its shares, conquer its territory, and rule it as an absolute monarch, under the forms of the British Constitution. He is at once a promoter, a soldier, an explorer, and a ruler. Mr. Hope's hero is, moreover, selfish and coarse, and hence women fall helplessly in love with him. His company is the Car of Juggernaut, and he drives it over every obstacle in its way. The merit of the book lies not in the plot, which is neither new nor striking, but in the exceedingly clever way in which the character of the hero is drawn. This is the first time that this peculiar type of modern Englishman has made his appearance in fiction, at least in a leading part, and there is not the least room for doubt as to the reception he will meet. Moreover, there are half-a-dozen characters in Mr. Hope's portrait gallery, which are painted by a man who can both draw and colour. It is true that the people whom one meets in the world of flesh and blood do not talk with the ceaseless brilliancy of Mr. Hope's men and women, but it would be ungrateful, as well as preposterous, to find fault with a novel because the author does not write stupid dialogue. It is one of the numerous advantages of Art over Nature that the former is permitted to escape the dullness of the latter. Nature has her uses, which I conceive to consist chiefly in furnishing room for kitchen-gardens, but it is the office of Art to improve upon Nature. Faithfully to reproduce the conversation of ordinary people bears about the same relation to the art of the true novel writer, as photography bears to the art of the landscape painter.

* * * *

The ornamental landscape advertisers complain that the railways are shamefully disfiguring the face of nature. Living as I do in a suburban town, I have a good deal of sympathy with this complaint. No matter in what direction I take my walks abroad, I presently come across an ugly railway embankment, that not only disfigures the beauty of the landscape but distracts my attention from the delightful advertisements that have been so benevolently placed in every green field and shady nook. These advertisements are intended to turn the wearied mind from its ordinary channels, and to lift the thoughts up from spiritual and unreal things to the useful and ennobling contemplation of one's organs. When I read the advertisement of that presumably intoxicating beverage "Wazzermatter Tea,"

I am filled with pleasant anticipations of the tea that awaits my return to my home; and when I note the earnest call of the benevolent Cartman to take a box of his large Bronchial Pills, I involuntarily meditate upon that sweet and holy theme, my bronchial tubes. While I am thus profitably and pleasantly employed, suddenly there rushes across the face of the landscape a vulgar, prosaic, noisy, railway train. The screech of the whistle and the roar of the wheels deafen me, and the cloud of dust that follows the passage of the train gets into my eyes, and for the moment blurs every advertisement. I no longer look forward to tea, for the railway train has awakened in me a thirst for blood. I cease to contemplate my own organs, and am filled with malevolent wishes for the destruction of the entire complement of organs belonging to the men who deface the landscape with railways. It is, of course, a shameful thing that the landscape should be crowded with trees to such an extent that there is room only here and there for an advertising board, but trees, although they possess none of the interest of a well-worded advertisement, are useful when a man wants to sit in the shade and smoke in comfort. For the railways, however, there is nothing that can be said. It seems as if they were deliberately placed within sight of the advertising boards for the sole purpose of distracting the attention of the pedestrian from the latter. I understand that railway passengers sometimes complain that the landscape advertisements are ugly and objectionable. If this is not the height of impudence, I should like to know where that interesting and proverbial height is situated

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Professional philanthropists are agreed in asserting that the Russian Government is the most tyrannical and brutal government on the face of the earth. The continued existence of Count Tolstoi is a sufficient refutation of this libel. Years ago Count Tolstoi wrote a novel of such outrageous length that the man who, with faculties enfeebled by age, succeeded in reaching the last chapter, was never able to remember the first eight or ten volumes of the book. Under almost any of the so-called Liberal governments a man guilty of writing a novel of the length of *War and Peace*, would have been promptly shut up where he could do no more harm, but the Russian Government permitted Count Tolstoi to retain not only his liberty but his writing materials. Then the Count left the Orthodox Church, and invented a new religion, the chief tenet of which seems to be that every man must work out his own salvation with a spade. Dressed like a peasant he worked in the fields, but he unfortunately forgot that a peasant does not write books, and so, when he laid down the spade at sunset, he took up the devastating pen. At one time he writes a romance to illustrate the shameful

wickedness of marriage. At another a pamphlet to prove that patriotism is a monstrous evil, fostered by wicked monarchs for their own selfish purposes. And yet the Czar bears with Count Tolstoi, and never even hints that Siberia is, so to speak, yawning for him. This shows that instead of being tyrannical and brutal, the Russian Government is miserably mild and weak. Now that Count Tolstoi has proved, to his own satisfaction, that patriotism is a crime, and that marriage is shameful, he may be expected to write other so-called novels to teach us that cowardice is the noblest of virtues, and that the hypocrisy which pretends to revere a garrulous lunatic as the greatest of living novelists, is the utmost height to which human virtue can attain. I can forgive Count Tolstoi for writing *War and Peace*, for I find the work quite useful when I need a heavy weight with which to press photographs, but I cannot forgive the Russian Government for its weakness in not trying the effect of the soft breezes and salubrious mines of Siberia in curing Count Tolstoi of his baneful habit of writing interminable tracts and calling them novels. I should really like to know the object for which, in the opinion of the Russian Government, Siberia was created.

* * * *

Those who wish to know the truth as to what happens at Lourdes cannot do better than to read the exhaustive blue book—in a yellow cover—which M. Zola has put forth in the guise of a romance. The book has now been before the public for more than six weeks, and yet no one seems to have noticed that it is, to some extent, an argument in support of the ingenious religion invented by the late Madame Blavatsky. M. Zola does not believe in the supernatural, and of course cannot admit that there is anything miraculous in the cures which take place at Lourdes. He concedes that people have been cured at Lourdes of paralysis, blindness, and various other afflictions, but he explains these cures by the perfectly tenable hypothesis that diseases due to, or connected with, any disorder of the nervous system, may be cured by the influence of the imagination upon the nerves. But M. Zola also admits that in many cases large open wounds have been instantaneously healed at Lourdes, and new sound flesh has instantaneously taken the place of diseased tissue. When M. Zola attempts to explain this fact, for such he asserts it to be, by suggesting that in many instances external wounds are purely nervous in their origin, and hence may be healed by an effort of the imagination, he slides insensibly into the fold of theosophy. Madame Blavatsky taught that men can slash themselves with razors, and then cause the most horrible gashes instantaneously to heal, by the mere exercise of the will power. This is in substance identical with M. Zola's explanation of the healing of wounds at Lourdes. I have the greatest respect for M. Zola's judgment, but if I am to believe

that an ulcer in the leg can be instantaneously healed by a bath in the water of Lourdes, it seems to me that it would be easier to believe the Roman Catholic explanation of the miracle, than to believe the theosophic explanation of it. If I must believe either in the Blessed Virgin or Madame Blavatsky I prefer to believe in the former. It is certainly strange to find so hardened a materialist as M. Zola accepting unconsciously the teaching of the High Priestess of Theosophy.

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If Mr. Hall Caine's *Manxman* were a weak book, instead of being, as it is, one of the strongest novels of the last decade, it would still deserve respectful consideration, because of the immense amount of hard and careful work which has gone to its composition. Only the dumbest reader can fail to perceive that the writer has conscientiously striven to do his very best, and he has reason to be proud of the result. Mr. Caine has done good work in his previous novels, but the *Manxman* is a long step upwards. I assume that by this time every reader of THE IDLER is familiar with the *Manxman*, and as criticism of the book would resolve itself into monotonous praise, I shall not attempt it. It has left on my mind the impression that the air of the Isle of Man is favourable to the abnormal development of the conscience. The chief persons of Mr. Caine's story are bullied and victimised by their consciences to an extent that is extremely painful. "Philip's" conscience makes him lead a miserable life, and finally sacrifice his reputation and his position in the world, because he was unintentionally led into betraying the confidence of his friend. "Kate's" consciences drive her to attempt suicide, and "Pete's" conscience, which was perhaps the worst bully of them all, makes him abandon the child he loved in order to please the wife that had been false to him. A conscience that is kept under proper control, and made to know its place, is a very useful thing, unless, of course, the owner is a statesman; but a conscience of the Manx variety must be a far more ruinous possession than the proverbial white elephant. Had these three people of whom Mr. Caine writes so delightfully refused to be slaves to their overbearing and unreasonable consciences, they might have been moderately happy, instead of unspeakably miserable. If "Philip" and "Kate" had had the courage to defy their consciences, and the good sense to forget what was over and done with, all three of them might have led happy and useful lives. Instead of so doing they must wreck their own lives, and the life of poor unsuspecting Pete, at the dictation of their tyrannical and unfeeling consciences. Evidently there is something in the Manx air which produces fatty degeneracy of the conscience, and as my own conscience is already kept in order with great difficulty, I shall keep carefully away from the Isle of Man.



"SEVERAL OF THEM WEPT."

*The Stark Munro Letters.**

BY A. CONAN DOYLE.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE HUTCHINSON.

III.

WITHOUT any figure of speech I feel quite ashamed—really ashamed, when I think of you, Bertie. I send you one or two enormously long letters, burdened, as far as I can remember them, with all sorts of useless detail. Then, in spite of your kindly answers and your sympathy, which I have done so little to deserve, I drop you completely for more than six months. By this J pen I swear that it will not happen again, and this letter may serve to bridge the gap and to bring you up to date in my poor affairs, in which, of all outer mankind, you alone take an interest.

You remember that when I wrote last I had just come back from visiting the Cullingworths at Avonmouth, and he had promised to let me know what steps he took in appeasing his creditors. As I expected, I have not had one word from him since. But in a roundabout way I did get some news as to what happened. From this account, which was second-hand, and may have been exaggerated, Cullingworth did exactly what I had recommended, and calling all his creditors together he made them a long statement as to his position. The good people were so touched by the picture that he drew of a worthy man fighting against adversity that several of them wept, and there was not only complete unanimity as to letting their bills stand over, but even some talk of a collection then and there to help Cullingworth on his way. He has, I understand, left Avonmouth, but no one has any idea what has become of him. It is generally supposed that he has gone to England. He is a strange fellow, but I wish him luck wherever he goes.

When I came back, I settled down once more to the routine of my father's practice, holding on there until something may turn up. And for six months I have had to wait—a weary six months they have been. You see, I cannot ask my father for money—or at least I cannot bring myself to take an unnecessary penny of his money—for I know how hard a fight it is with

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him to keep the roof over our heads, and pay for the modest little horse and trap which are as necessary to his trade as a goose is to a tailor. Foul fare the grasping taxman who wrings a couple of guineas from us on the plea that it is a luxury! We can just hold on; and I would not have him a pound the poorer for me. But you can understand, Bertie, that it is humiliating for a man of my age to have to go about without any money in my pocket. It affects me in so many petty ways. A poor man may do me a kindness, and I have to seem mean in his eyes. I may want a flower for a girl, and must be content to appear ungallant. Actually, although I am still captain of the cricket club, I have, on one excuse or another, to get out of playing in the out matches, as I find the railway fares too much for me. Even when we play at home I have to slink off at lunch-time and have something cheap at the confectioner's, while the others troop away to their half-crown spread. I don't know why I should be ashamed of this, since it is no fault of mine, and I hope that I don't show to any one else that I *am* ashamed of it, but to you, my dear Bertie, I don't mind confessing that it hurts my self-respect terribly. If you could scrape down to my inmost core you would find, I suspect, that in spite of my rough-and-ready ways I am really as sensitive as a girl and as proud as Lucifer.

I have often wondered why some of those writing fellows don't try their hands at drawing the inner life of a young man just from about the age of puberty until he begins to find his feet a little. Men are very fond of analysing the feelings of their heroines, which they cannot possibly know anything about, while they have little to say of the inner development of their heroes, which is an experience which they have themselves undergone. I should like to try it myself, but it would need blending with fiction, and I never had a spark of imagination. But I have a vivid recollection of what I went through myself. At the time I thought—as everybody thinks—that it was a unique experience, but since I have heard the confidences of my father's patients I am convinced that it is the common lot. The shrinking, horrible shyness, alternating with occasional absurd fits of audacity which represent the reaction against it, the longing for close friendship, the agonies over imaginary slights, the extraordinary sexual doubts, the deadly fears caused by non-existent diseases, the vague emotion produced by all women, and the half-frightened thrill by particular ones, the

aggressiveness caused by fear of being afraid, the sudden blacknesses, the profound self-distrust—I dare bet that you have felt every one of them, Bertie, just the same as I have, and that the first lad of eighteen whom you see out of your window is suffering from them now.

This is all a digression, however, from the fact



"MY MOTHER."

that I have been six months at home and am very weary of it, and very pleased at the new development of which I shall have to tell you. The practice here, although unremunerative, is very busy with its three-and-sixpenny visits and guinea confinements, so that both the governor and I have had plenty to do. You know how I admire him, and yet I fear there is little intellectual

sympathy between us. He appears to think that those opinions of mine upon religion and politics, which come hot from my inmost soul, have been assumed either out of indifference or bravado. So I have ceased to talk on vital subjects with him, and, though we affect to ignore it, we both know that there is a barrier there. Now, with my mother—ah, but my mother must have a paragraph to herself.

You met her, Bertie ! You must remember her sweet face, her sensitive mouth, her peering, short-sighted eyes, her general suggestion of a plump little hen who is still on the alert about her chickens. But you cannot realise all that she is to me in our domestic life. Those helpful fingers, that sympathetic brain ! Ever since I can remember her she has been the quaintest mixture of the housewife and the woman of letters, with the high-bred spirited lady as a basis for either character. Always a lady, whether she was bargaining with the butcher, or breaking in a skittish charwoman, or stirring the porridge, which I can see her doing, with the porridge stick in one hand, and the other holding her *Revue des deux Mondes* within two inches of her dear nose. That was always her favourite reading, and I can never think of her without the association of its brownish-yellow cover.

She is a very well-read woman, is the mater ; she keeps up-to-date in French literature, as well as in English, and can talk by the hour about the Goncourts, and Flaubert, and Gautier. Yet she is always hard at work, and how she imbibes all her knowledge is a mystery. She reads when she knits, she reads when she scrubs, she even reads when she feeds her babies. We have a little joke against her, that at an interesting passage she deposited a spoonful of rusk and milk into my little sister's ear-hole, the child having turned her head at the critical instant. Her hands are worn with work, and yet where is the idle woman who has read as much ?

Then there is her family pride. That is a very vital portion of the mother. You know how little I think of such things. If the Esquire were to be snipped once and for ever from the tail of my name, I should be the lighter for it. But, *ma foi !* (to use her own favourite expletive) it would not do to say this to her. On the Pakenham side (she is a Pakenham), the family can boast of some fairly good men—I mean on the direct line—but when we get on the side branches, there is not a monarch upon earth who does not roost on that huge family

tree. Not once, nor twice, but thrice did the Plantagenets intermarry with us ; the Dukes of Brittany courted our alliance, and the Percies of Northumberland intertwined themselves with our whole illustrious record. So in my boyhood she would expound the matter, with hearth-brush in one hand, and a glove full of cinders in the other, swinging my knicker-swalling with pride, until was as tight as a sausage-skin, as I contemplated the gulf which separated me from all other little boys who swung their legs upon tables. To this day, if I chance to do anything of which she strongly approves, the dear heart can say no more than that I am a thorough Packenham ; while, if I fall away from the straight path, she says, with a sigh, there are points in which I take after the Munros.

She is broad-minded and intensely practical in her ordinary moods, though open to attacks of romance.

I can recollect her coming to see me at a junction through which my train passed, with a six months' absence on either side of the incident. We had five minutes' conversation, my head out of the carriage window. "Wear flannel next your

while I would sit
bockered legs,
my waistcoat



"DEPOSITED A SPOONFUL OF RUSK
AND MILK INTO MY LITTLE SISTER'S EAR-HOLE."

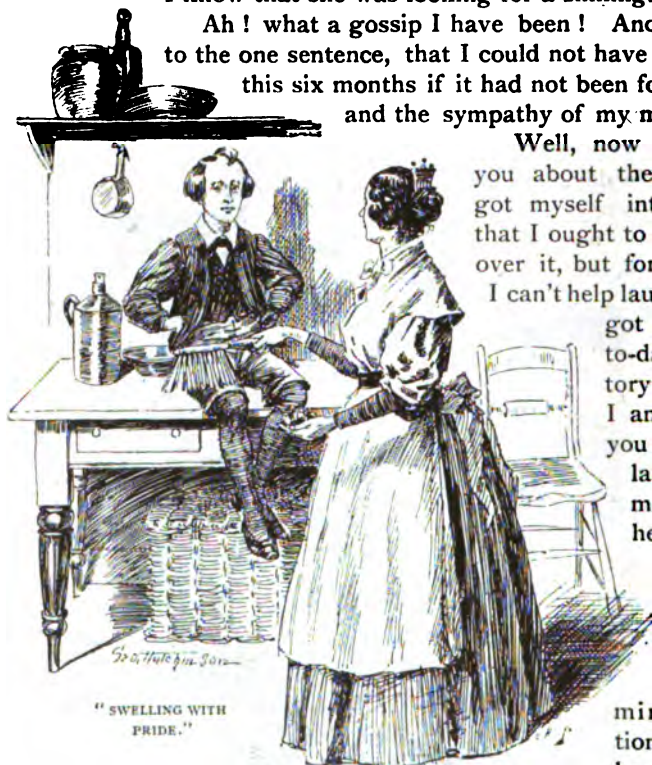
skin, my dear boy, and never believe in eternal punishment," was her last item of advice as we rolled out of the station. Then, to finish her portrait, I need not tell you, who have seen her, that she is young-looking and comely to be the mother of about thirty-five feet of humanity. She was in the railway carriage, and I on the platform, the other day. "Your husband had better get in or we'll go without him," said the guard. As we went off the mother was fumbling furiously in her pocket, and I know that she was looking for a shilling.

Ah! what a gossip I have been! And, all to lead up to the one sentence, that I could not have stayed at home this six months if it had not been for the company and the sympathy of my mother.

Well, now I want to tell you about the scrape that I got myself into. I suppose that I ought to pull a long face over it, but for the life of me I can't help laughing. I have

got you almost up-to-date in my history now, for what I am going to tell you happened only last week. I must mention no names here, even to you, for the curse of Ernulphus, which includes eight-and-forty minor imprecations, be upon the head of the man

who kisses and tells. You must know, then, that within the boundaries of this city there are two ladies, a mother and a daughter, whom I shall call Mrs. and Miss Laura Andrews. They are patients of the governor's, and have become, to some extent, friends of the family. Madame is Welsh, charming in appearance, dignified in her manners, and High Church in her convictions. The daughter is rather taller than the mother,



but, otherwise, they are strikingly alike. The mother is thirty-six, and the daughter eighteen. Both are exceedingly charming. Had I to choose between them, I think, *entre nous*, that the mother would have attracted me most, for I am thoroughly of Balzac's opinion as to the woman of thirty. However, fate was to will it otherwise.

It was coming home from a dance which first brought Laura and me

together. You know how easily and suddenly these things happen, beginning in playful teasing, and ending in something a little warmer than friendship. You squeeze the slender arm, which is passed through yours, you venture to take the little gloved hand, you say good night, at absurd length, in the shadow of the door. It is innocent and very interesting, love trying his wings in a first little flutter. He will keep his sustained flight later on the better for the practice. There was never any question of engagements between us, nor any suggestion of harm. She knew that I was a poor devil, with neither means nor prospects, and I know

that her mother's will was her law, and that her course was already marked out for her. However, we exchanged our little confidences, and met occasionally by appointment, and tried to



"IN THE SHADOW OF THE DOOR."

make our own lives brighter without darkening those of any one else. I can see you shake your head here, and growl, like the comfortable married man that you are, that such relations are very dangerous. So they are, my boy, but neither of us cared ; she out of innocence, and I out of recklessness, for, from the beginning, all the fault in the matter was mine.

Well, matters were in this state when, one day last week a note came up to the Dad, saying that Mrs. Andrews' servant was ill, and would he come at once. The old man had a touch of gout, so I donned my professional coat, and sallied forth, thinking that, perhaps, I might combine pleasure with business, and have a few words with Laura. Sure enough, as I passed up the gravel drive, which curves round to the door, I glanced through the drawing-room window, and saw her sitting painting, with her back to the light. It was clear that she had not heard me. The hall door was ajar, and then I pushed it open, no one was in the hall. A sudden fit of roguishness came over me. I pushed the drawing-room door very slowly wider, crept in upon tiptoe, stole quietly across, and, bending down, I kissed the artist upon the nape of the neck. She turned round with a squeal, and it was the mother !



I don't know whether you have ever been in a tighter corner

than that, Bertie. It was quite tight enough for me. I remember that I smiled as I stole across the carpet on that insane venture. I did not smile again that evening. It makes me hot now when I think of it.

Well, I made the most dreadful fool of myself. At first the good lady, who (as I think I told you) is very dignified and rather reserved, could not believe her senses. Then as the full force of my enormity came upon her, she reared herself up until she seemed the tallest and the coldest woman I had ever seen. It was an interview with a refrigerator. She asked me what I had ever observed in her conduct which had encouraged me to subject her to such an outrage. I saw, of course, that any excuses upon my part would put her on the right tack and give poor Laura away, so I stood with my hair bristling and my top hat in my hand, presenting, I am sure, a most extraordinary figure. Indeed, she looked rather funny herself, with her palette in one hand, her brush in the other, and the blank astonishment on her face. I stammered out something about hoping that she did not mind, which made her more angry than ever. "The only possible excuse for your conduct, sir, is that you are under the influence of drink," said she. "I need not say that we do not require the services of a medical man in that condition." I did not try to disabuse her of the idea, for really I could see no better explanation, so I beat a retreat in a very demoralised condition. She wrote a letter to my father about it in the evening, and the old man was very angry indeed. As to the mater, she is as staunch as steel, and quite prepared to prove that poor Mrs. A. was a very deep, designing person, who had laid a trap for poor innocent Johnnie. So there has been a grand row, and not a soul upon earth has the least idea of what it all means, except only yourself as you read this letter.

You can imagine that this has not contributed to make life here more pleasant, for my father cannot bring himself to forgive me. Of course, I don't wonder at his anger. I should be just the same myself. It does look like a shocking breach of professional honour, and a sad disregard of his interests. If he knew the truth he would see that it was nothing worse than a silly, ill-timed boyish joke. However, he never shall know the truth.

And now there is some chance of my getting something to do. We had a letter to-night from Christie and Howden, the writers to the *Signet*, saying that they desire an interview with

me in view of a possible appointment. We can't imagine what it means, but I am full of hopes. I go to-morrow morning to see them, and I shall let you know the result.

Good-bye, my dear Bertie. Your life flows in a steady stream, and mine in a broken torrent. Yet I would have every detail of what happens to you.

IV.

DOES not lunacy strike you, Bertie, as being a very eerie thing? It is a disease of the soul. To think that you may have a man of noble mind, full of every lofty aspiration, and that a gross physical cause, such as the fall of a spicule of bone from the inner table of his skull on to the surface of the membrane which covers his brain, may have the ultimate effect of turning him into an obscene creature with every bestial attribute! That a man's individuality should swing round from pole to pole, and yet that one life should contain these two contradictory personalities—is it not a wondrous thing?

I ask myself where is the man, the very, very inmost essence of the man? See how much you may subtract from him without touching it. It does not lie in the limbs which serve him as tools, nor in the apparatus by which he is to digest, nor in that by which he is to inhale oxygen. All these are mere accessories, the slaves of the lord within. Where, then, is he? He does not lie in the features which are to express his emotions, nor in the eyes and ears, which can be dispensed with by the blind and deaf. Nor is he in the bony framework which is the rack over which Nature hangs her veil of flesh. In none of these things lies the essence of the man. And now what is left? An arched, whitish, putty-like mass, some fifty-odd ounces in weight, with a number of white filaments hanging down from it, looking not unlike the medusæ which float in our summer seas. But these filaments only serve to conduct nerve force to muscles and to organs which serve secondary purposes. They may themselves therefore be disregarded. Nor can we stop here in our elimination. This central mass of nervous matter may be pared down on all sides before we seem to get at the very seat of the soul. Suicides have shot away the front-lobes of the brain, and have lived to repent it. Surgeons have cut down upon it and have removed sections.



"MY MOTHER STOOD ON A CHAIR AND LANDED ME TWICE ON THE EAR WITH A CLOTHES BRUSH."

Much of it is merely for the purpose of furnishing the springs of motion, and much for the reception of impressions. All this may be put aside as we search for the physical seat of what we call the soul—the spiritual part of the man. And what is left then? A little blob of matter, a handful of nervous dough, a few ounces of tissue, but there—somewhere there—lurks that impalpable seed to which the rest of our frame is but the pod. The old philosophers who put the soul in the pineal gland were not right, but, after all, they were uncommonly near the mark.

You'll find my physiology even worse than my theology, Bertie. I have a way of telling stories backwards to you, which is natural enough when you consider that I always sit down to write under the influence of the last impressions which have come upon me. All this talk about the soul and the brain arises simply from the fact that I have been spending the last few weeks with a lunatic. And how this came about I will tell you as clearly as I can.

You remember that in my last I explained to you how restive I had been getting at home, and how my idiotic mistake had annoyed my father, and had made my position here very uncomfortable. Then I mentioned, I think, that I had received a letter from Christie & Howden, the lawyers. Well, I brushed up my Sunday hat, and my mother stood on a chair and landed me twice on the ear with a clothes brush, under the impression that she was making the collar of my overcoat look more presentable. With which accolade out I sallied into the world, the dear soul standing on the steps peering after me and waving me success.

Well, I was in considerable trepidation when I reached the office, for I am a much more nervous person than any of my friends will ever credit me with being. However, I was shown in at once to Mr. James Christie, a wiry, sharp, thin-lipped kind of man, with an abrupt manner, and that sort of Scotch precision of speech which gives the impression of clearness of thought behind it.

"I understand from Professor Maxwell that you have been looking about for an opening, Mr. Munro," said he. Maxwell had said that he would give me a hand if he could, but you remember that he had a reputation for giving such promises rather easily. I speak of a man as I find him, and to me he has been an excellent friend.

"I should be very happy to hear of any opening," said I.

"Of your medical qualifications there is no need to speak,"

he went on, running his eyes all over me in the most questioning way. "Your Bachelorship of Medicine will answer for that. But Professor Maxwell thought you peculiarly fitted for this vacancy for physical reasons. May I ask you what your weight is?"

"Fourteen stone."

"And you stand; I should judge, about six feet high?"

"Precisely."

"Accustomed, too, as I gather, to muscular exercise of every kind. Well, there can be no question that you are the very man for the post, and I shall be very happy to recommend you to Lord Saltire."

"You forget," said I, "that I have not yet heard what the position is, or the terms which you offer."

He began to laugh at that. "It was a little precipitate on my part," said he, "but I do not think that we are likely to quarrel as to position or terms. You may have heard, perhaps, of the sad misfortune of our client, Lord Saltire? Not? To put it briefly then, his son, the Hon. James Derwent, the heir to the estates and the only child, has been struck down by the sun, while fishing without his hat, last July. His mind has never recovered from the shock, and he has been ever since in a chronic state of moody sullenness, which breaks every now and then into violent mania. His father will not allow him to be removed from Rathtully Castle, and it is his desire that a medical man should stay there in constant attendance upon his son. Your physical strength would of course be very useful in restraining those violent attacks of which I have spoken. The remuneration will be twelve pounds a month, and you would be required to take over your duties to-morrow."

I walked home, my dear Bertie, with a bounding heart, and the pavement like cotton-wool under my feet. I found just eightpence in my pocket, and I spent the whole of it on a really good cigar with which to celebrate the occasion. Old Cullingworth has always had a very high opinion of lunatics for beginners. "Get a lunatic, my boy! Get a lunatic!" he used to say. Then it was not only the situation, but the fine connection that it opened up. I seemed to see exactly what would happen. There would be illness in the family, Lord Saltire himself, perhaps, or his wife. There would be no time to send for advice, I would be consulted. I would gain their confidence and become their family attendant. They would recommend

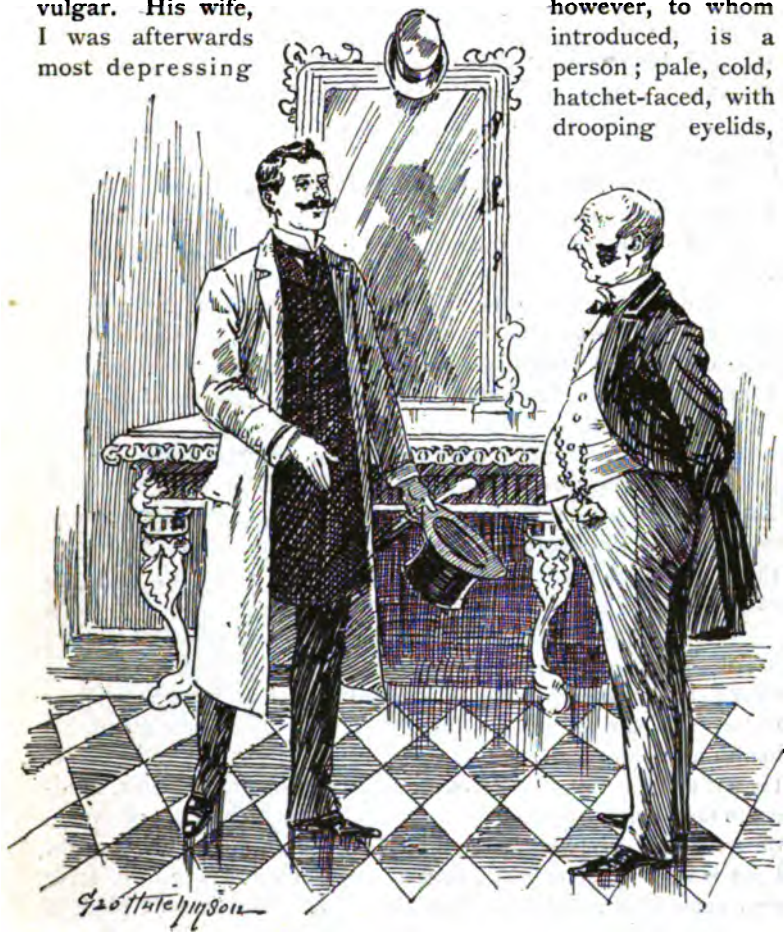
me to their wealthy friends. It was all as clear as possible. I was debating before I reached home whether it be worth my while to give up a lucrative country practice in order to take the Professorship which might be offered me.

My father took the news philosophically enough, with some rather sardonic remark about my patient and me being well qualified to keep each other company. But to my mother it was a flash of joy, followed by a thunderclap of consternation. I had only three under-shirts ; the best of my linen had gone to Belfast to be refronted and recuffed ; the nightgowns were not marked yet ; there were a dozen of those domestic difficulties of which the mere male never thinks. A dreadful vision of Lady Saltire looking over my things and finding the heel out of one of my socks overwhelmed my mother. Out we trudged together, and before evening her soul was at rest, and I had mortgaged in advance my first month's salary. She was great, as we walked home, upon the grand people into whose service I was to enter. "As a matter of fact, my dear," said she, "they are in a sense relations of yours. You are very closely allied to the Percies, and the Saltires have Percy blood in them also. They are only a cadet branch, and you are close upon the main line ; but still, it is not for us to deny the connection." She brought a cold sweat out upon me by suggesting that she should make things easy by writing to Lord Saltire and explaining our respective positions. Several times during the evening I heard her murmur complacently that they were only the cadet branch.

Am I not the slowest of story-tellers ? But you encourage me to it by your sympathetic interest in details. However, I shall move along a little faster now. Next morning I was off to Rathtully, which, as you know, is in the north of Perthshire. It stands three miles from the station, a great grey-pinnacled house, with two towers cocking out above the fir-woods, like a hare's ears from a tussock of grass. As we drove up to the door I felt pretty solemn, not at all as the main line should do when it condescends to visit the cadet branch. Into the hall, as I entered, came a grave, learned-looking man, with whom, in my nervousness, I was about to shake hands cordially. Fortunately he forestalled the impending embrace by explaining that he was the butler. He showed me into a small study, where everything stank of varnish and morocco leather, there to await the great man. He proved, when he came, to be a much less formidable figure than his retainer ; indeed, I felt

thoroughly at my ease with him from the moment he opened his mouth. He is guzzled, red-faced, sharp-featured, with a prying and yet benevolent expression, very human, and just a trifle vulgar. His wife, I was afterwards most depressing

however, to whom introduced, is a person; pale, cold, hatchet-faced, with drooping eyelids,



"I WAS ABOUT TO SHAKE HANDS CORDIALLY."

and very prominent blue veins at her temples. She froze me up again just as I was budding out under the influence of her husband. However, the thing that interested me most of all was to see my patient, to whose room I was taken by Lord Saltire after we had had a cup of tea.

The room was a large bare one, at the end of a long

corridor. Near the door was seated a footman, placed there to fill up the gap between two doctors, and looking considerably relieved at my advent. Over by the window (which was furnished with a wooden guard, like that of a nursery), sat a tall, yellow-haired, yellow-bearded young man, who raised a pair of startled blue eyes as we entered. He was turning over the pages of a bound copy of the "Illustrated London News."

"James," said Lord Saltire, "this is Dr. Stark Munro, who has come to look after you."

My patient mumbled something in his beard which seemed to me suspiciously like "Damn Dr. Stark Munro!" The peer evidently thought the same, for he led me aside by the elbow.

"I don't know whether you have been told that James is a little rough in his ways at present," said he; "his whole nature has deteriorated very much since this calamity came upon him. You must not be offended by anything he may say or do."

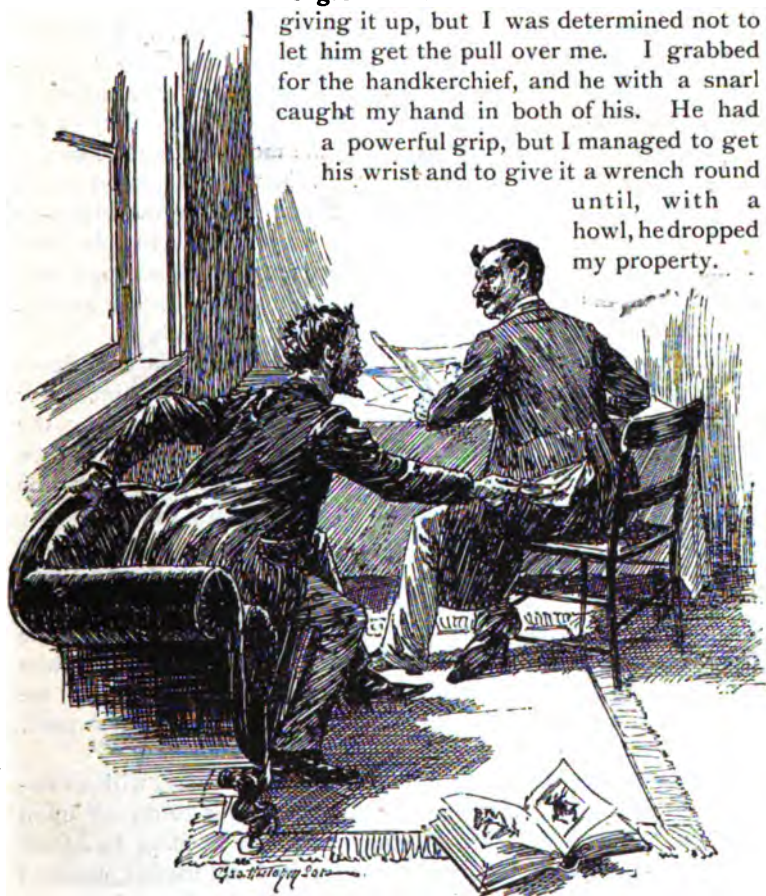
"Not in the least," said I.

"There is a taint of this sort upon my wife's side," whispered the little lord, "her uncle's symptoms were identical. Dr. Peterson says that the sunstroke was only the determining cause. The predisposition was already there. I may tell you that the footman will always be in the next room, so that you can call him if you need his assistance."

Well, it ended by lord and lacquey moving off, and leaving me with my patient. I thought that I would lose no time in establishing a kindly relation with him, so I drew a chair over to his sofa and began to ask him a few questions about his health and habits. Not a word could I get out of him in reply. He sat as sullen as a mule, with a kind of sneer about his handsome face which showed me very well that he had heard everything. I tried this way and tried that, but not a syllable could I get from him, so at last I turned from him and began to look over some illustrated papers on the table. He doesn't read, it seems, and will do nothing but look at pictures. Well, I was sitting like this with my back half turned, when you can imagine my surprise to feel something plucking gently at me, and to see a great brown hand trying to slip its way into my coat pocket. I caught at the wrist and turned swiftly round, but too late to prevent my handkerchief being whisked out and concealed behind the Hon. James Derwent, who sat grinning at me like a mischievous monkey.

"Come, I may want that," said I, trying to treat the matter as a joke.

He used some language which was more scriptural than religious. I saw that he did not mean giving it up, but I was determined not to let him get the pull over me. I grabbed for the handkerchief, and he with a snarl caught my hand in both of his. He had a powerful grip, but I managed to get his wrist and to give it a wrench round until, with a howl, he dropped my property.



"I CAUGHT AT THE WRIST AND TURNED SWIFTLY ROUND."

"What fun!" said I, pretending to laugh, "let us try again. Now you take it up and see if I can get it again."

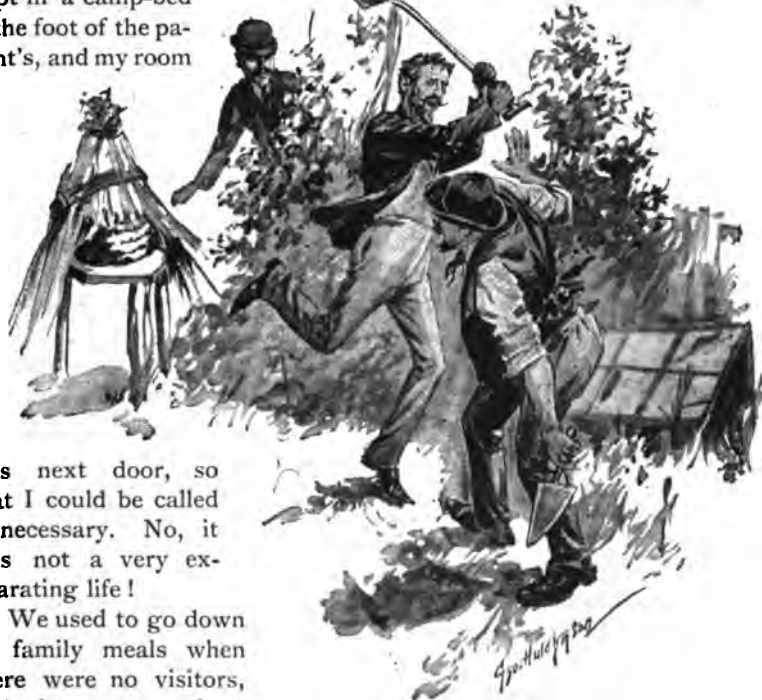
But he had had enough of that game. Yet he appeared to be better humoured than before the incident, and I got a few short answers to the questions which I put to him. And here comes in the text which started me preaching about lunacy at

the beginning of this letter. *What* a marvellous thing it is ! This man, from all I can learn of him, has suddenly swung clean over from one extreme of character to the other. Every plus has in an instant become a minus. He's another man but in the same case. I am told that he used to be (only a few months ago, mind you) most fastidious in dress and speech. Now he is a foul-tongued rough ! He had a nice taste in literature. Now he stares at you if you speak of Shakespeare. Querest of all, he used to be a very high-and-dry Tory in his opinions. He is fond now of airing the most democratic views, and in a needlessly offensive way. When I did get on terms with him at last, I found that there was nothing on which he could be drawn on to talk so soon as on politics. In substance I am bound to say that I think his new views are probably saner than his old ones, but the insanity lies in his sudden reasonless change and in his violent blurts of speech.

It was some weeks, however, before I gained his confidence so far as to be able to hold a real conversation with him. For a long time he was very sullen and suspicious, resenting the constant watch which I kept upon him. This could not be relaxed, for he was full of the most apish tricks. One day he got hold of my tobacco pouch, and stuffed two ounces of my tobacco down the long barrel of an Eastern gun which hangs on the wall. He jammed it all down with the ramrod, and I was never able to get it up again. Another time he threw an earthenware spittoon through the window, and would have sent the clock after it had I not prevented him. Every day I take him for a two-hours' constitutional, save when it rains, and then we walk religiously for the same space up and down the room. Heh ! but it was a deadly, dreary kind of life.

I was supposed to have my eye upon him all day, with a two-hour interval every afternoon, and an evening to myself upon Fridays. But then, what was the use of an evening to myself when there was no town near, and I had no friends whom I could visit. I did a fair amount of reading, for Lord Saltire let me have the run of his library. Gibbon gave me a couple of enchanting weeks. You know the effect that he produces. You seem to be serenely floating upon a cloud, and looking down on all these pigmy armies and navies, with a wise mentor ever at your side to whisper to you the inner meaning of all that majestic panorama. If I had the choice, Bertie, I had rather be the author of those eight volumes than of Shakespeare's plays.

Now and again young Derwent introduced some excitement into my dull life. On one occasion when we were walking in the grounds, he suddenly snatched up a spade from a grass-plot, and rushed at an inoffensive under-gardener. The man ran screaming for his life, with my patient cursing at his very heels and me with him. When I at last laid my hand on his collar, he threw down his weapon and shrieks of laughter. It was only mischief and not ferocity, but when that under-gardener saw us coming after that he was off with a face like a cream cheese. At night the attendant slept in a camp-bed at the foot of the patient's, and my room



was next door, so that I could be called if necessary. No, it was not a very exhilarating life!

We used to go down to family meals when there were no visitors, and there we made a curious quartette. Jimmy

(as he wished me to call him) glum and silent, I with the tail of my eye always twisting round to him, Lady Saltire with her condescending eyes and her blue veins, and the good-natured peer, fussy and genial, but always rather subdued in the presence of

"RUSHED AT AN INOFFENSIVE UNDER-GARDENER."

his wife. She looked as if a glass of good wine would do her good, and he as if he would be the better for abstinence; and so, in accordance with the usual lopsidedness of life, he drank freely and she took nothing but lime-juice and water. You cannot imagine a more ignorant, intolerant, narrow-minded woman than she. If she had only been content to be silent and hidden that small brain of hers, it would not have mattered, but there was no end to her bitter and exasperating clacking. What was she, after all, but a thin pipe for conveying disease from one generation to another. She was bounded by insanity upon the north and upon the south. I resolutely set myself to avoid all argument with her, but she knew, with her woman's instinct, that we were as far apart as the poles, and so she took a pleasure in waving the red flag before me. One day she was waxing eloquent as to the crime of a minister of an Episcopal church performing any service in a Dissenting chapel. I suppose my eyes were less under control than my tongue, for she suddenly turned upon me with:—

“I see that you don't agree with me, Dr. Munro.”

I replied quietly that I did not, and tried to change the conversation, but she was not to be shaken off.

“Why not, may I ask?”

I explained that in my opinion the tendency of the age was to break down those ridiculous doctrinal points which are so useless, and which have for so long set people by the ears. I added that I hoped the time was soon coming when good men of all creeds would throw this lumber overboard, and join hands together.

She half rose, almost speechless with indignation.

“I presume,” said she, “that you are one of those people who would separate the Church from the State.”

“Most certainly,” I answered.

She stood erect in a kind of cold fury, and swept out of the room. Jimmy began to chuckle, and his father looked perplexed.

“I am sorry that my opinions are offensive to Lady Saltire,” I remarked.

“Yes, yes, it's a pity, a pity,” said he. “Well, well, we must say what we think, but it's a pity you think it—a very great pity.”

I quite expected to get my dismissal over this business, and, indeed, indirectly, I may say that I did so. From that day

Lady Saltire was as rude to me as she could well be, and never lost an opportunity of making attacks upon what she imagined to be my opinions. Of these I never took the slightest notice, but at last on an evil day she went for me point-blank, so that there was no getting away from her. It was just at the end of lunch, when the footman had left the room. She had been talking about Lord Saltire's going up to London to vote upon some question in the House of Lords.

"Perhaps, Dr. Munro," said she, turning acidly upon me, "that is also an institution which has not been fortunate enough to win your approval?"

"It is a question, Lady Saltire, which I would much prefer not to discuss," I answered.

"Oh, you might just as well have the courage of your convictions," said she. "Since you desire to despoil the National Church, it is natural enough that you should wish also to break up the Constitution. I have heard that an Atheist is always a red Republican."

Lord Saltire rose, wishing, I have no doubt, to put an end to the conversation. Jimmy and I rose also, and suddenly I saw that instead of moving towards the door he was going to his mother. Knowing his little tricks, I passed my hand under his arm, and tried to steer him away. She noticed it, however, and interfered.

"Did you wish to speak to me, James?"

"I want to whisper in your ear, mother."

"Pray don't excite yourself, sir," said I, again attempting to detain him. Lady Saltire arched her aristocratic eyebrows.

"I think, Dr. Munro, that you push your authority rather far when you venture to interfere between a mother and her son," said she. "What was it, my poor, dear boy?"

Jimmy bent down and whispered something in her ear. The blood rushed into her pale face, and she sprang from him as if he had struck her. Jimmy began to snigger.

"This is your doing, Dr. Munro," she cried furiously. "You have corrupted my son's mind, and encouraged him to insult his mother."

"My dear! my dear!" said her husband soothingly, and I quietly led the recalcitrant Jimmy upstairs. I asked him what it was that he had said to his mother, but got nothing but chuckles in reply.

I had a presentiment that I should hear more of the matter,

and I was not wrong. Lord Saltire called me into his study in the evening.

"The fact is, doctor," said he, "that Lady Saltire has been extremely annoyed and grieved about what occurred at lunch to-day. Of course, you can imagine that such an expression coming from her own son, shocked her more than I can tell."

"I assure you, Lord Saltire," said I, "that I have no idea at



"BENT DOWN AND WHISPERED SOMETHING
IN HER EAR."

"Well," said he, "without tails, I may say that what he a blasphemous wish, most expressed, as to the future of that Upper House to which I have the honour to belong."

"I am very sorry," said I, "and I assure you that I have never encouraged him in his extreme political views, which seem to me to be symptoms of his disease."

"I am quite convinced that what you say is true," he answered, "but Lady Saltire is unhappily of the opinion that you have instilled these ideas into him. You know that it is a

all what passed
between Lady
Saltire and
my patient."
going into de-
whispered was
coarsely ex-
pressed

little difficult sometimes to reason with a lady. However, I have no doubt that all may be smoothed over if you would see Lady Saltire, and assure her that she has misunderstood your views upon this point, and that you are personally a supporter of a Hereditary Chamber."

It put me in a tight corner, Bertie ; but my mind was instantly made up. From the first word I had read my dismissal in every uneasy glance of his little eyes.

"I am afraid," said I, "that that is rather further than I am prepared to go. I think that since there has been for some weeks a certain friction between Lady Saltire and myself, it would, perhaps, be as well that I should resign the post which I hold in your household. I shall be happy, however, to remain here until you have found someone to take over my duties."

"Well, I am sorry it has come to this, and yet it may be that you are right," said he, with an expression of relief ; "as to James, there need be no difficulty about that, for Dr. Patterson could come in to-morrow morning."

"Then to-morrow morning let it be," I answered.

"Very good, Dr. Munro. I will see that you have your cheque before you go."

So there was the end of all my fine dreams about aristocratic practices, and wonderful introductions. I believe the only person in the whole house who regretted me was Jimmy, who was quite downcast at the news. His grief, however, did not prevent him from brushing my new top-hat the wrong way on the morning that I left. I did not notice it until I reached the station, and a most undignified object I must have looked when I took my departure.

So ends the history of a failure. I am, as you know, an absolute fatalist, and do not believe that such a thing as chance exists, so I am bound to think that this experience was given to me for some end. It was a preliminary canter for the big race, perhaps. My mother was disappointed, but tried to show it as little as possible. My father was a little sardonic over the matter. I fear that the gap between us widens. By the way, an extraordinary card arrived from Cullingworth during my absence. "You are my man," said he ; "mind that I am to have you when I want you." There was no date and no address, but the postmark was Bradfield, in the north of

England. Does it mean nothing? Or may it mean everything?
We must wait and see.



"BRUSHING MY NEW TOP-HAT THE WRONG WAY."

Good-bye, old man, let me hear equally fully about your own
affairs. How did the Rattray business go off?

(To be continued.)



GILBERT PARKER.

“**T**HE Manor House at Beaugard, Monsieur? Ah, *bien sûr*, I mind it very well. It was the first in Québec, and there are many tales. It had a chapel and a gallows. Its baron, he had the power of life and death, and the right of the seigneur—you understand? which he used only once; and then what trouble it made for him and the woman, and the seigneurie, and the parish, and all the country!”

“What is the whole story, Pierre?” said Tybalt, who had spent months in the French half-breed’s company, stalking game, and tales, and legends of the North.

“*Mais*, I do not know for sure; but the Abbé Frontone, he and I were snowed up together in that same house which now belongs to the Church, and in the big fireplace, where we sat on a bench toasting our knees and our bacon, he told me the tale as he knew it. He was a great scholar—there is none greater. He had found papers in the wall of the house, and from the Gover’nment chest he got more. Then there were the tales handed down, and the records of the Church—for she

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knows the true story of every man that has come to New France from first to last. So, because I have a taste for tales, and gave him some, he told me of the Baron of Beaugard and that time he took the right of the seigneur, and the end of it all.

"Of course it was a hundred and fifty years ago, when Bigot was Intendant—ah, what a rascal was that Bigot, robber and deceiver! He never stood by a friend, and never fought fair a foe—so the Abbé said. Well, Beaugard was no longer young. He had built the Manor House, he had put up his gallows, he had his vassals, he had been made a lord, he had quarrelled with Bigot and had conquered, but at great cost; for Bigot had such power, and the Governor had trouble enough to care for himself against Bigot, though he was Beaugard's friend.

"Well, there was a good lump of a fellow who had been a soldier, and he picked out a girl in the Seignury of Beaugard to make his wife. It is said the girl herself was not set for the man, for she was of finer stuff than the peasants around her, and showed it. But her father and mother had a dozen other children, and what was the girl, this Falise, to do? She said yes to the man, the time was fixed for the marriage, and it came along.

"So. At the very hour of the wedding Beaugard came by, for the Church was in mending, and he had given leave it should be in his own chapel. Well, he rode by just as the bride was coming out with the man—Garoche. When he saw Falise he gave a whistle, then spoke in his throat, reined up his horse, and got down. He fastened his eyes on the girl's. A strange look passed between them—he had never seen her before, but she had seen him often, and when he was gone, had helped the housekeeper with his rooms. She had carried away with her a stray glove of his. Of course it sounds droll, and they said of her when all came out it was wicked; but evil is according to a man's own heart, and the girl had hid this glove as she hid whatever was in her soul—hid it even from the priest. . . .

"*Bien*, the Baron looked and she looked, and he took off his hat, stepped forward, and kissed her on the cheek. She turned pale as a ghost, and her eyes took on the colour that her cheeks lost. When he stepped back he looked close at the husband. 'What is your name?' he said. 'Garoche, Monsieur

le Baron,' was the reply. 'Garoche! Garoche!' he said, eyeing him up and down. 'You have been a soldier?' 'Yes, Monsieur le Baron?' 'You have served with me?' 'Against you, Monsieur le Baron . . . when Bigot came fighting.' 'Better against me than for me,' said the Baron speaking to himself, though he had so strong a voice that what he said could be heard by those near him—that is, those who were tall, for he was six and a half feet, with legs and shoulders like a bull.

"He stooped and stroked the head of his hound for a moment, and all the people stood and watched him, wondering what next. At last he said: 'And what part played you in that siege, Garoche?' Garoche looked troubled, but answered: 'It was in the way of duty, Monsieur le Baron—I with five others captured the relief-party sent from your cousin the Seigneur of Vadrome.' 'Oh,' said the Baron looking sharply, 'you were in that, were you? Then you know what happened to the young Marmette?' Garoche trembled a little, but drew himself up and said: 'Monsieur le Baron, he tried to kill the Intendant—there was no other way.' 'What part played you in *that*, Garoche?' Some gasped, for they knew the truth, and they feared the wild temper of the Baron. 'I ordered the firing-party, Monsieur le Baron,' he answered.

"The Seigneur's eyes got fierce and his face hardened, but he stooped and drew the ears of the hound through his hand softly. 'Marmette was my cousin's son, and had lived with me,' he said; 'A brave lad, and he had a nice hatred of villainy—else he had not died.' A strange smile played on his lips for a moment, then he looked at Falise steadily. Who can tell what was working in his mind? 'War is war,' he went on, 'and Bigot was your master, Garoche; but the man pays for his master's sins this way or that. Yet I would not have it different, no, not a jot.' Then he turned round to the crowd, raised his hat to the Curé, who stood on the chapel steps, once more looked steadily at Falise, and said: 'You shall all come to the Manor House, and have your feasting there, and we will drink to the homecoming of the fairest woman in my seigneurie. Your company also, Monsieur le Curé,' he said, as he saw the priest gazing at him, and with that he turned round, bowed to Falise, put on his hat, caught the bridle through his arm, and led his horse to the Manor House, the big hound following.

"This was in the afternoon. Of course, whether they wished

or not, Garoche and Falise could not refuse, and the people were glad enough, for they would have a free hand at meat and wine, the Baron being bountiful of table. And it was as they guessed, for though the time was so short, the people at Beaugard soon had the tables heavy with food and drink. It was just at the time of candle-lighting the Baron came in, and gave a toast. 'To the dwellers in Eden to-night,' he said—'Eden against the time of the Angel and the Sword.' I do not think that any except the Curé and the woman understood, and she, maybe, only because a woman feels a thing, and knows from that, even when her brain does not. After they had done shouting to his toast, he said a good-night to all, and they began to leave, the Curé among the first to go, with a troubled look in his face. He could not have prevented what came after, and so he held his peace. Then, too, he had been with the Baron before the feasting, and what passed between them who can tell?

"As the people left, the Baron said to Garoche and Falise, 'A moment with me before you go.' The woman started, for she thought of one thing, and Garoche started, for he thought of another—the siege of Beaugard and the killing of young Marmette. But they followed the Seigneur to his chamber. Coming in he shut the door on them. Then he turned to Garoche. 'You will accept the roof and bed of Beaugard to-night, my man,' he said, 'and come to me here at nine to-morrow morning.' Garoche stared hard for an instant. 'Stay here,' he said, 'Falise and me stay here in the manor, Monsieur le Baron!' 'Here, even here, Garoche; so good-night to you,' said the Baron. Garoche turned towards the girl. 'Then come, Falise,' he said, and reached out his hand. 'Your room shall be shown you at once,' the Seigneur added softly, 'the lady's at her pleasure.'

"Then a cry burst from Garoche, and he sprang forward, but the Baron waved him back. 'Stand off,' he said, 'and let the lady choose between us.' 'She is my wife,' said Garoche. 'I am your Seigneur,' said the other. 'And there is more than that,' he went on; 'for damn me, she is too fine stuff for you, and the Church shall untie what she has tied to-day.' At that Falise fainted, and the Baron caught her as she fell. He laid her on a couch, keeping an eye on Garoche the while. 'Loose her gown,' he said, 'while I get brandy.' Then he turned to a cupboard, poured liquor, and came over. Garoche had her dress open at the neck and bosom, and was staring at something on her breast. The Baron saw also, stooped, with a strange sound



"THE SIEGE OF BEAUGARD."

in his throat, and picked it up. 'My glove,' he said. 'And on her wedding day! Here is its mate, fished this morning from my hunting coats, a pair the Governor gave me. You see, man, you see her choice.'

"At that he stooped and put some brandy to her lips. Garoche drew back sick and numb, and did nothing, only stared. Falise came to herself soon, and when she felt her dress open, gave a cry. Garoche could have killed her then, when he saw her shudder from him, as if afraid, over towards the Baron, who held the glove in his hand, and said: '*Voilà*, Garoche, you had better go. In the next room they will tell you where to sleep. To-morrow, as I said, you will meet me here. We shall have things to say, you and I.' Ah, that Baron, he had a droll mind, but in truth he loved the woman, as you shall see. -

"Garoche got up without a word, went to the door and opened it, the eyes of the Baron and the woman following him, for there was a devil in his eye. In the other room there were men waiting, and he was taken to a chamber and locked in. You can guess what that night must have been to him—*ouï alors*.

"What was it to the Baron and Falise?"

"Monsieur, what do you think? Beaugard had never had an eye for women; loving his hounds, fighting, quarrelling, doing wild strong things. So, all at once he was face to face with a woman who has the look of love in her face, who was young, rich, and fine of body, so the Abbé said, and was walking to marriage, at her father's will, and against her own, carrying his glove in her bosom. What should he do? But no, ah, no, Monsieur, not as you think, not quite. Wild, with the bit in his teeth, yes; but at heart—well, here was the one woman for him, he knew it all in a minute, and he would have her once and for all, and till death should come their way. And so he said to her as he raised her, she drawing back afraid, her heart hungering for him, yet fear in her eyes, and her fingers trembling as she softly pushed him from her. You see, she did not know quite what was in his heart. She was the daughter of a tenant vassal, who had lived in the family of a grand seigneur in her youth, the friend of his child—that was all, and that was where she got her manners and her mind.

"She got on her feet and said: 'Monsieur le Baron, you will let me go—to my husband. I cannot stay here. Oh, you are great, you are noble, you would not make me sorry, make

me to hate myself—and you. I have only one thing in the world of any price—you would not steal my happiness?’ He looked at her steadily in the eyes, and said: ‘Will it make you happy to go to Garoche?’ She raised her hands and wrung them. ‘God knows, God knows, I am his wife,’ she said helplessly, ‘and he loves me.’ ‘And God knows, God knows,’ said the Baron, ‘it is all a question of whether one shall feed and two go hungry, or two gather and one have the stubble. Shall not he stand in the stubble? What has he done to merit you? What would he do? You are for the master, not the man; for love, not the feeding on; for the manor-house and the hunt, not the cottage and the loom.’

“She broke into tears, her heart thumping in her throat. ‘I am for what the Church did for me this day,’ she said. ‘Oh, sir, I pray you, forgive me and let me go. Do not punish me, but forgive me—and let me go. I was wicked to wear your glove—wicked, wicked.’ ‘But no,’ was his reply, ‘I shall not forgive you so good a deed, and you shall not go. And what the Church did for you this day, she shall undo—by all the saints, she shall! You came sailing into my heart this hour past on a strong wind, and you shall not slide out on an ebb-tide. I have you here, as your Seigneur, but I have you here as a man who will —’

“He sat down by her at that point, and whispered softly in her ear: at which she gave a cry which had both gladness and pain. ‘Surely, even that,’ he said, catching her to his breast. ‘And the Baron of Beaugard never broke his word.’ What should be her reply? Does not a woman when she truly loves, always believe? That is the great sign. She slid to her knees, and dropped her head into the hollow of his arm. ‘I do not understand these things,’ she said, ‘but I know that the other was death, and this is life. And yet I know too, for my heart says so, that the end—the end, will be death.’

“‘Tut, tut, my flower, my wild-rose,’ he said, ‘of course the end of all is death, but we will go a-Maying first, come October and the breaking of the world when it must. We are for Maying now, my rose of all the world!’ It was as if he meant more than what he said, as if he saw what would come in that October which all New France never forgot, when as he said, the world broke over them.

“The next morning the Baron called Garoche to him. The man was like some mad buck harried by the hounds, and he

gnashed his teeth behind his shut lips. The seigneur eyed him curiously yet kindly too, as well he might, for when was ever man to hear such a speech as came to Garoche the morning after his marriage. 'Garoche,' the Baron said, having waved his men away, 'as you see, the lady made her choice—and for ever. You and she have said your last farewell in this



"WHISPERED SOFTLY IN HER EAR."

world—for the wife of the Baron of Beaugard can have nothing to say to Garoche the soldier.' At that Garoche snarled out, 'The *wife* of Baron Beaugard! That is a lie to shame all hell.' The Baron wound the lash of a riding-whip round and round his fingers quietly, and said: 'It is no lie, my man, but the truth.' Garoche eyed him savagely, and growled: 'The Church

made her my wife yesterday. And you !—you !—you !—ah, you who had all—you with your money and place, which could get all easy, you take the one thing I have. You, the grand seigneur are only a common robber ! Ah ! Jésus—if you would but fight me !’

“The Baron, very calm, said, ‘First, Garoche, the lady was only your wife by a form which the Church shall set aside—it could never have been a true marriage. Second, it is no stealing to take from you what you did not have. I took what was mine—remember the glove ! For the rest—to fight you ? No, my churl, you know that’s impossible. You may shoot me from behind a tree or a rock, but swording with you ?—Come, come, a pretty gossip for the Court ! Then, why wish a fight ? Where would you be, as you stood before me—you ?’ The Baron stretched himself up, and smiled down at Garoche. ‘You have your life, man ; take it and go—to the farthest corner of New France, and show not your face here again. If I find you ever again in Beaugard, I will have you whipped from parish to parish. Here is money for you—good gold coins. Take them, and go.’

“Garoche got still and cold as stone. He said in a low, harsh voice, ‘Monsieur le Baron, you are a common thief, a wolf, a snake. Such men as you come lower than Judas. As God has an eye to see, you shall pay all one day. I do not fear you nor your men, nor your gallows. You are a jackal, and the woman has a filthy heart—a ditch of shame.’

“The Baron drew up his arm like lightning, and the lash of his whip came singing across Garoche’s pale face. Where it passed a welt rose at once, but the man never stirred. The arm came up again, but a voice behind the Baron said, ‘Ah, no, no, not again !’ There stood Falise. Both men looked at her. ‘I have heard Garoche,’ she said. ‘He does not judge me right. My heart is no filthy ditch of shame. But it was breaking when I came from the altar with him yesterday. Yet I would have been a true wife to him after all. A ditch of shame—ah, Garoche—Garoche ! And you said you loved me, and that nothing could change you !’

“The Baron said to her, ‘Why have you come, Falise ? I forbade you.’ ‘Oh, my lord,’ she answered, ‘I feared—for you both. When men go mad they know not what they do. When they slander and hate, a devil has gone into them.’ The Baron, taking her by the hand, said, ‘Permit me,’ and he led her to

the door for her to pass out. She looked back sadly at Garoche, standing for a minute very still. Then Garoche said, 'I command you, come with me; you are my wife.' She did not reply, but shook her head at him. Then he spoke out high and fierce: 'May no child be born to you. May a curse fall on you. May your fields be barren, and your horses and cattle die. May you never see nor hear good things. May the waters leave their courses to drown you, and the hills their bases to bury you, and no hand lay you in decent graves!'

"The woman put her hands to her ears, and gave a little cry, and the Baron pushed her gently on, and closed the door after her. Then he turned on Garoche. 'Have you said all you wish?' he asked. 'For, if not, say on, and then go; and go so far you cannot see the sky that covers Beaugard. We are even now—we can cry quits. But that I have a little injured you, you should be done for instantly. But hear me: if I ever see you again, my gallows shall end you straight. Your tongue has been gross before the mistress of this manor; I will have it torn out, if it so much as syllables her name to me or to the world again. She is dead to you. Go, and go for ever!' He put a bag of money on the table, but Garoche turned away from it, and without a word left the room, and the house, and the parish, and said nothing to no man of the evil that had come to him.

"But what talk was there, and what dreadful things were said at first!—that Garoche had sold his wife to the Baron; that he had been killed and his wife taken; that the Baron kept him a prisoner in a cellar under the Manor House. And all the time there was Falise with the Baron—very quiet and sweet and fine to see, and going to Chapel every day, and to Mass on Sundays—which no one could understand, any more than they could see why she should be called the Baroness of Beaugard; for had they all not seen her married to Garoche? And there were many people who thought her vile. Yet truly, at heart, she was not so—not at all. Then it was said that there was to be a new marriage; that the Church would let it be so, doing and undoing, and doing again. But the weeks and the months went by, and it was never done. For, powerful as the Baron was, Bigot, the Intendant, was powerful also, and fought the thing with all his might. The Baron went to Quebec to see the Bishop and the Governor, and though promises were made, nothing was done. It must go to the King and then to the



"GOING TO CHAPEL EVERY DAY."

Pope, and from the Pope to the King again, and so on. And the months and the years went by, as they waited, and with them came no child to the Manor House of Beaugard. That was the only sad thing—that and the waiting, so far as man could see. For never were man and woman truer to each other than these, and never was a lady of the manor kinder to the poor, or a lord freer of hand to his vassals. He would bluster sometimes, and string a peasant up by the heels, but his gallows was never used, and, what was much in the minds of the people, the Curé did not refuse the woman the sacrament.

“At last, the Baron, fierce because he knew that Bigot was the cause of the great delay, so that he might not call Falise his wife, seized a transport on the river, which had been sent to brutally levy upon a poor gentleman, and when Bigot’s men resisted, shot them down. Then Bigot sent against Beaugard a company of artillery and some soldiers of the line. The guns were placed on a hill looking down on the Manor House across the little river. In the evening the cannons arrived, and in the morning the fight was to begin. The guns were loaded and everything was ready. At the Manor all was making ready also, and the Baron had no fear.

“But Falise’s heart was heavy, she knew not why. ‘Eugene,’ she said, ‘if anything should happen!’ ‘Nonsense, my Falise,’ he answered; ‘what should happen?’ ‘If—if you were taken—were killed!’ she said. ‘Nonsense, my rose,’ he said again, ‘I shall not be killed. But if I were, you should be at peace here.’ ‘Ah, no, no,’ said she. ‘Never. Life to me is only possible with you. I have had nothing but you—none of those things which give peace to other women—none. But I have been happy—oh, yes, very happy. And, God forgive me, Eugene, I cannot regret, and I never have. But it has been always and always my prayer that, when you die, I may die with you—at the same moment. For I cannot live without you, and, besides, I would like to go to the good God with you to speak for us both; for oh, I loved you, I loved you, and I love you still, my husband, my adored.’

“He stooped—he was so big, and she but of middle height—kissed her, and said, ‘See, my Falise, I am of the same mind. We have been happy in life, and we could well be happy in death together.’ So they sat long, long into the night and talked to each other—of the days they had passed together, of cheerful things, she trying to comfort herself, and he trying to bring



"SEIZED A TRANSPORT ON THE RIVER."

smiles to her lips. At last they said good-night, and he lay down in his clothes ; and after a few moments she was sleeping like a child. But he could not sleep, for he lay thinking of her and of her life—how she had come from humble things and fitted in with the highest. At last, at break of day, he arose and went outside. He looked up at the hill where Bigot's two guns were. Men were already stirring there. One man was standing beside the gun, and another not far behind. Of course the Baron could not know that the man behind the gunner said : ' Yes, you may open the dance with an early *salute* ' ; and he smiled up boldly at the hill and went into the house, and stole to the bed of his wife to kiss her before he began the day's fighting. He looked at her a moment, standing over her, and then stooped and softly put his lips to hers.

" At that moment the gunner up on the hill used the match, and an awful thing happened. With the loud roar the whole hillside of rock and gravel and sand split down, not ten feet in front of the gun, moved with horrible swiftness upon the river, filled its bed, and turned it from its course, and, sweeping on, swallowed the Manor House of Beaugard. There had been a crack in the hill, the water of the river had sapped its foundations, and it needed only this shock to send it down. And twice since that day this same river has been shifted from its course by breaking banks and hills : the last time, but two years ago, as all remember.

" And so, as the woman wished : the same hour for herself and the man. And when at last their prison was opened by the willing hands of Bigot's men, they were found cheek by cheek, free for ever from all mortal bonds, but bound in the sacred marriage of Death.

" But another had gone the same road, for, at the awful moment, beside the bursted gun, the dying gunner, Garoche, lifted up his head, saw the loose travelling hill, and said with his last breath : ' The waters drown them, and the hills bury them, and ——— '. He had his way with them, and after that perhaps the great God had His way with him—eh ?—eh ? "

A Drunken Driver.

BY FRANK FELLER.





"I DON'T SEE WHAT YOU CAN DO," SAID I, COMPASSIONATELY.

Imagination.

BY ANTHONY HOPE.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY HAL HURST.

I MET her on the shores of the lake. There were real tears in her eyes.

"Oh, Mr. Vansittart," she cried. "What shall I do? My husband's out in a boat, ever so far away, and the wind's rising, and the boatman says that it's awfully dangerous when there's a storm, and——"

I tilted my hat forward and scratched my head.

"I don't see what you *can* do," said I, compassionately. I had sat next her three nights at *table d'hôte*, and liked her extremely.

"Look at those trees! Oh, how it blows! And see! Great waves!"

"The wind is certainly getting up," I admitted, sitting down on a garden-seat.

"Oh, Mr. Vansittart, suppose he should be drowned!"

"Suppose he——?" I paused. The idea was a new one to me. I turned it over in my mind. "Well, suppose he should?" I said at last in an inquiring tone.

"And we've only been married a year!"

"Yes, yes," said I, thoughtfully. "Your love is still fresh?"

"As fresh as the day when——"

"Your romance has not worn off, the day of disillusion has not come. Your husband's memory would be the sweetest of consolations to you."

"But, Mr. Vansit——"

"There would be no alloy in your recollections. You are young, your life would not be spoilt, but it would be, as it were, hallowed by sweet and not too poignant regrets. In the course of time the violence of grief would wear off."

She sat down on the bench beside me, and dug the end of her parasol into the path.

"You would feel," I pursued, "that sacred as these memories were—precious as they were—you would not be justified in giving your whole life to them. And, at last, it may be that another would come who——"

"Oh, I can hardly imagine that, Mr. Vansittart."

"Try," said I, encouragingly. "One who, though not perhaps the equal in all respects of him you had lost, could yet shelter you from the world——"

"I should want *someone*, shouldn't I?"

"And give you an honest, enduring, unwavering affection."

"It wouldn't be the same thing," said she.



"‘‘YES, IT DOES SOUND NICE,’ SHE CONCEDED."

"Depend upon it," I returned earnestly, "it would be in some ways better. For he—your second husband—might well be one who could appreciate the depths of your nature, who would be serious when you were——"

"Instead of always making jokes? Ye-es, Mr. Vansittart."

"Serious, and yet able to enter into your lighter moods—always good-tempered——"

"He *would* be a wonderful husband, then!"

"Generous, nay, lavish in giving you whatever——"

"Fancy!"

"You wished for; unsparing in his efforts to please you——"

"What, after marriage?"

"Devoted absolutely to you. Why, it's a lovely picture."

"Yes, it does sound nice," she conceded, digging with the parasol.

"Could not such a one," I continued, leaning towards her, "by his affectionate and constant efforts, in the course of time heal the wound caused by your cruel calamity."

"I don't know. Yes—I suppose so—well, perhaps in time, Mr. Vansittart, he might."

"He would," said I, positively. "I can imagine myself——"

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Vansittart?"

"I say, I can *imagine* myself making it the work—the whole preoccupation—the worthy task—of my life thus to restore happiness to one from whom it seemed to have departed for ever."

"It would be a splendid thing for a man to do, wouldn't it."

There was a pause. Then she said:

"But, Mr. Vansittart, would you—who are so young and so—and so—and so—I mean, who are so young—be content with a heart that had spent its first love on another, in which the freshness of youthful——"

"I sometimes think," I interrupted, in low but urgent tones, "that affection of that kind is nobler, higher, better than the rash impulsiveness of an ignorant girl. It would be a sympathetic communion of minds, of *souls*, Mrs. Lawrence."

"Yes, I see. Yes, it would, Mr. Vansittart."

"My sympathy for you," I pursued, "would soften and inspire my nature. I should be elevated to your level. And perhaps, at last, when long years had obliterated——"

"Well, had *blurred*, Mr. Vansittart."

"Yes, had blurred the pain of memory, we might come to see—to understand—how what once seemed so distressing was really, in spite of its sadness, the necessary condition for the perfect development of two human lives."

For a few moments we sat in thought. Then Mrs. Lawrence observed: "Good so often comes out of suffering, doesn't it?"

"It indeed seems to be the way of the world."

"A woman placed as you describe, Mr. Vansittart, would feel, I'm sure, so deep, so strong a gratitude for the man who had nobly dedicated his life to her, that, as time wore on, she would give to him an affection, different in kind, perhaps, but not inferior in intensity, to that which she had felt for the man who first won her heart."

"That would be the only reward I should hope for," said I.

"So that, in the end, I should feel—it would be *borne in* upon me that this man was my real, my true, my only——"



"'ARE YOU THE LADY WHAT ASKED JIM DOBBS ABOUT THE GENTLEMAN?'"

At this point Mrs. Lawrence stopped abruptly, for a shadow fell between us, and, on looking up, we saw a stout, elderly man, wearing a blue jersey, standing just in front of us.

"Beg pardon, mum," said he, "but are you the lady what asked Jim Dobbs about the gentleman what's out in the boat?"

"About the—what? Oh, yes, I suppose—oh, yes, I am."

"Well, you've no cause to be put out about 'im, mum. He's

just rounding the point, and he'll be ashore in two minutes' time."

"But Dobbs said it was very dangerous," I protested.

"Dobbs don't know everything, sir, beggin' your pardon. Anyways the gentleman's safe enough. Glad of it for your sake, mum."

"Thank you—thank you, so much," said Mrs. Lawrence.

The elderly man stood looking at me in such a manner that I took sixpence out of my pocket and gave it to him. To be



"LEAPT UP FROM HER SEAT."

frank, I have seldom grudged a sixpence more. Then the elderly man passed on.

There was a long silence. Mrs. Lawrence had made quite a little pit in the gravel walk. Once she looked at me, and, finding me regarding her (rather gloomily, I believe), hastily turned away again with a blush. At last the silence became intolerable—almost improper, in fact.

"What were we talking about when that man interrupted us?" asked Mrs. Lawrence, with a desperate assumption of ease.



"MRS. LAWRENCE DID SIT ELSEWHERE AT DINNER."

It is a rule of mine to give a plain answer to a plain question.

"We were talking," said I, "of what would have happened if Dobbs had known everything." And, having thus said, I suddenly began to laugh.

Women are strange creatures. Mrs. Lawrence leapt up from her seat and stood over me. Her eyes flashed with indignation, and she positively brandished her parasol at me.

"You horrid, horrid boy!" she cried.

"My dear Mrs. Lawrence——" I protested.

"You've made me talk as if I——"

"It was a mere hypothesis," I pleaded.

"As if I—oh! Anyhow, if my husband were drowned a thousand times over, I'd never speak to *you*."

"So you say now," said I, composedly. "But you know you were quite taken with the prospect a little while ago."

"Mr. Vansittart, you're *wicked*! How can I go and tell my poor dear Robbie?"

"I don't insist on your telling him," said I, in a conciliatory tone.

"Perhaps you think I don't care for him?" she cried, defiantly.

"The hypothesis was that you did," said I. "That's what made it so interesting."

"I shall sit somewhere else at dinner, to-night," Mrs. Lawrence announced, haughtily.

"If you go on like this," I observed warningly, "I shall end by being——"

"You can be just what you like."

"By being glad," I concluded.

"Glad! Glad of what?"

"Glad," said I, "that I see your husband walking towards us in perfect health."

As I spoke he came within speaking distance.

"Hullo, Georgie!" he cried to his wife. "Here I am - had a bit of a blow, though."

Mrs. Lawrence ran a few steps towards him. I took the liberty of following.

"Vansittart been looking after you?" asked Lawrence, with a smile.

"Oh, my darling Robbie," cried Mrs. Lawrence, "I've been imagining all sorts of things about you."

"Foolish child!" said he, fondly. "Did you think I was going to be drowned?"

"We didn't exactly think it," I broke in. "We assumed it by way of——"

"Please, Robbie, will you take me into the house?" said Mrs. Lawrence, hastily.

Mrs. Lawrence did sit elsewhere at dinner; but Lawrence said to me, as we played billiards afterwards:

"Tell you what, old chap. If a fellow wants his wife to be extra pleasant to him, he can't do better than risk his life on this beastly lake," and he smiled most contentedly.

It was merely penitence, of course. But I let him alone.





PARIS fairs come but little within the ken of the fashionable world ; they are all but unknown of tourist Paris, for Baedeker mentions them not. They are to be found in the suburbs and on the *Boulevards Extérieurs*, and are visited only by Bohemians and the curious who love not the beaten path ; by the *petits bourgeois*, the people who are poor, and the people who are not respectable. Therefore, they are crowded.

These fairs are perambulatory, passing from quarter to quarter and from suburb to suburb all the year round. The *Préfet de Police* decides as to what quarters shall be visited by the fair, and in what order, and the length of stay in each ; while to the *Commissaire* of the quarter visited falls the task of allotting the site for each booth, and assessing the ground rental which is paid to the local *Maire*. This quarter (Vaugirard) receives about twelve thousand francs, for the three weeks' sojourn of the fair within its boundaries, the money going to the local schools ; while in some other quarters it is distributed amongst the poor, and in yet others held by the *Maire* for various municipal purposes. The rates differ in different *arrondissements*, but in each are the subject of not a little haggling between the *Commissaire* and the booth holders. The proud proprietor of a "Porcelain Lottery" occupying a fairly large booth, told me that he paid two hundred francs rental for the three weeks ; which means that he was probably asked three hundred, and succeeded in beating down the *Commissaire*, for nothing is done in France without bargaining.

The fair extends, almost from the Place Breteuil, round the two sides of a square formed by the Boulevard and Rue de Vaugirard, to where the latter meets the Boulevard du Mont Par-

nasse, and consists of a street of booths, on either side of a well-lit avenue of splendid horse-chestnuts occupying the centre of the Boulevard. And now you are requested to accompany the painter and myself on our ramble, and we will start to "do" the Fair, from the Place de Breteuil. Hard by the picturesque water-tower, which looks somewhat like a small lighthouse which has strayed into a city by mistake, in the centre of the *Place*, one of the numerous merry-go-rounds, or *chevaux de bois*, is doing a roaring trade. Looking towards the distant Invalides, we have on our left the Tower of Eiffel, seemingly, but not really, close at hand—its spectral fabric stretching far up into the darkness; its glowing head-light shining with the serenity and the remoteness of a star. But turning about, our eyes are greeted by a strong contrast. The lights from the numerous street lamps and the booths show up the pale green and the white blossoms of the umbrageous avenue, beneath which flows an ever-restless crowd, while still brighter flashes of light are continually scintillating from the mirrors and prisms and crystal-embroidered canopies of the *chevaux de bois*; and from the gleaming helmets with their brazen crests and long black horse-hair tails—barbaric and picturesque—worn by the cuirassiers and dragoons, who with the chasseurs d'Afrique, and the eternal linesmen, are very much in evidence, here as elsewhere in Paris.

We pass by the *Théâtre Cocherie* at the corner, having no particular taste for Fair melodrama, but stop a moment to read a municipal notice, headed "Fête Foraine de Vaugirard," and which explicitly states that "the throwing of confetti, and the use of peacock's feathers at the fête is strictly forbidden." The latter was simply a craze in Paris at all the fêtes and carnivals of last year, the practice being to carry a long tail feather and poke it in your neighbour's face when the occasion offered, with the result that a great many people were nearly blinded. We pause before the "Maison Poitou," which bears the legend *Règle du Jeu d'Adresse*, and find that the interior of the booth bristles like a porcupine's back, with knives, daggers, swords, bayonets, and cheap revolvers, all placed on end and making a brave show. For ten centimes we are given six small iron quoits to pitch at this forest of arms, with the chance thrown in of securing any weapon on which a quoit happens to lodge. This is but one variety of innumerable temptations in the form of our old relative "Aunt Sally," and very amusing is the appear-

ance of booths full of comically designed masks at which the visitor is invited to shy the traditional cocoanut—the temple of this pastime being known as *Le Massacre des Innocents*.

Almost every second booth is a shooting gallery, and if young France does not turn out a good marksman it is not for want of opportunities for him to test his skill ; the targets are in a great many cases clay pipes, either stationary or swinging and dangling from strings, and blown eggs which balance and bob about on the top of jets of water. Our artist shatters one egg-shell



"ROLL UP! ROLL UP!"

after another, but fails to ruffle the equanimity of "Madame," whose business it is to look after the sous—as it always is Madame's business, throughout France—and see that we don't get more shots than we have paid for.

The peepshows or "panoramas" are numerous, and tempt the public with such a cheerful bill of fare as the following :—*Explosion de la Chaudière du lavoir de Boulogne. Explosion à la Chambre des Députés. Arrestation d'Emile Henry. Dernier*

attentat Anarchist Rue de Vaugirard. Emile Henry devant la cour d'Assises. Exécution de Vaillant. If you do not care for any of these agreeable subjects, you may feast your eyes on "The funeral of Jules Ferry," or on scenes from "The Life of Jean d'Arc," but the above programme is not without its significance, and is in the nature of things to be expected in a land where the execution of criminals is still a public spectacle, and where the Morgue is still bracketed with "places of amusement" to be visited by holiday sightseers.

All the old tricks of all the old fairs—since fairs existed in their present form—are to be seen here in full swing.

The showmen come out on to the little platforms in front of their booths, and bellow the French equivalent for "Roll up, roll up" with drum obligato; girls in tights come out and waltz together to give the yokels a taste of the glories to be beheld within; the performance is always just about to commence but dawdles strangely on the order of its commencement—until, in fact, a fairly numerous audience has assembled.

We resist the temptation to visit the booth where one can see tableaux of an *Episode de la Bataille de Gravelotte*, and like patriotic subjects, the entrée to which costs twenty centimes, "Soldiers and Children half-price"; we hurry past the *Salon de la Métempsychose* in spite of our curiosity to probe the mystery, symbolised in the life-size figure of a woman, apparently made of white gutta percha and shrouded in a creepy white sheet; we refuse to deviate from our path to inspect "L'Aerogyne," "queen of the aerolites," notwithstanding that the handbill bears a *nota* to the effect that "*Le spectacle est moral et l'on peut sans craintes conduire les enfants*"—of itself no little attraction—but make the best of our way to the "Pavilion de Marogain" to behold the *Messaouda Troupe Orientale*.

Our money is taken at the door by a well-dressed and rather intelligent-looking young Frenchman in spectacles, who could pass for a medical student, but once inside the tent we might imagine ourselves in Aden, Port Said, or some inland town of Algeria. On an ottoman in the centre of the back of the little stage is seated a youthful, rather pretty, and very graceful blonde, hailing from Bône in Algeria, and probably of mixed French and Arab blood.

She is clad in a red jersey bodice, little bolero jacket, and black and gold Turkish trousers; she has muslin streamers falling from the waist, wears on her head a little pointed silk

cap with strings of gold coins falling down the sides of her face and under her chin, and has on her feet tan-coloured Eastern shoes.

This woman dances very gracefully, and carries a couple of



"DANCES VERY GRACEFULLY."

naked sabres which, at intervals in the midst of her posturing and movements, she clashes together with rhythmical effect. These attitudes and motions, which would be impossible if the

dancer wore the corset of fashion, are made to an accompaniment of Arab singing or chanting, the instruments being an Arab drum, beaten with the fingers only, and tambourines; and the air, in a minor key, which at first strikes us as monotonous if not discordant, becomes, with constant repetition, almost exciting. The other members of the troop include a dark Arab woman from Constantin in Algeria, with a good-looking face and fine eyes, a very stout body and "podgy" ankles, dressed in a Turkish costume of yellow muslin, who does little but join in the aforesaid music; a "buck" nigger from Tunis in a fez, dull red velvet tunic and zouave trousers, who appears to be a sort of deputy to the manager; another Eastern of doubtful nationality dressed as a (stage) man-o'-war's man, who dances balancing a bottle of water on his forehead, finishing up with the *grande écarte*; and a swarthy Mexican half-breed in a vacquero's costume, who performs some Spanish dances with the castanets indifferently well.

By a judicious distribution of cigarettes we get on friendly terms with these people—more especially the "buck" nigger—and learn from them somewhat of their native lands, and then take our leave rather pleased and amused with this little "show" which, for such as it is, is genuine. We emerge into the outer air to be buttonholed for about the sixth time by a diminutive photographer, who wishes to take our photographs at five centimes each, or the French equivalent for sixpence a dozen. On this occasion he tells us as an extra inducement that he knows London well, and proposes in the near future to organize a similar fête to this and take it over to Hyde Park, but we are in considerable doubts if we shall live to see that day. In further conversation it transpires that the last time he was in Hyde Park he made the acquaintance of the London police, for even whose society he seems to have conceived a distaste; but as these confidences fail to soften our obduracy he at length leaves us, and we pursue our ramble towards the upper end of the fair.

In the crowd we notice several pensioners from the Invalides, an Italian model in peasant's dress, artists strolling about, sketch-book in hand, in search of "bits," and blue blouses and soldier's uniforms by the score. There are numerous sellers of a sweetmeat called *Framboise*—a pliant sort of elastic sweet paste, which they manufacture and plait in various patterns before the eyes of the purchaser, who in return for his coppers receives a length of the stuff cut off with the scissors.

There are also women selling and cooking on the top of little charcoal ovens a thin description of pancake, the cooking process being accompanied by a vile smell of rancid butter. Algerian and Tunisian sellers of nougat are to be met with at every turn, their labour being cheaper than that of the native-



"THE SWINGS."

born Frenchman, and their colour and semi-Eastern dress add to the picturesqueness of the scene.

We spend but little time over the *Musée Anatomique*, the attraction of which consists of coarse but fairly accurate models of the human form as it appears on the dissecting-table, and positively run from another booth, where two repulsive dwarfs

—natives of Paris—make a parade of their hideousness. Some of the shows are in the nature of frauds, a fact only ascertained after the gate-money is paid, and we find but little to interest us in this way till we “bring up” alongside Pezon’s Menagerie. This claims to be one of the largest travelling menageries in the world, but is not larger than most of them, and is far smaller than Bidel’s, now at Versailles. Bidel, who is a lion-tamer, made a fortune and bought a beautiful villa in the country, but still cannot refrain from going into the cages. Pezon is also a lion-tamer, and chats pleasantly to us on the subject, telling us among other things that he infinitely prefers dealing with the lions to the white bears, animals which he characterizes as extremely treacherous. The lions, he says, are, comparatively speaking, gentlemen, but the white bears are *canaille*. “I never enter their cage,” says he, “but I am afraid of their ‘going for me’ when my back is turned”; and all the while he is speaking these great white “*canaille*” from the frozen Pole, pace restlessly up and down on the other side of the bars and look at us with their sinister blue-white eyes, perhaps wondering when the hour will arrive for them to settle outstanding accounts with their gaoler.

The swings, in all their variety of forms, are well patronised, as are a species of rocking-horse, looking like a cross between a hobby-horse and a rocker; and to see grown men and women seated astride on these things, holding on to the wooden ears, and rocking backwards and forwards with abrupt jerks as if for dear life, makes one want to sit down and think hard.

Most of the merry-go-rounds are very gorgeous affairs with coloured canopies and hangings, fringes of glass prisms, and panels of looking-glass, fixed so as to reflect and still further increase the blaze of light from innumerable lamps. One of these machines, in place of the usual horses and cars, has half-sections of railway carriages, another small boats, while a third represents the deck of a ship, and in addition to the circular motion, oscillates from side to side in a manner calculated to make even the on-lookers sea-sick. A few of them have bands, but most of them are provided with powerful orchestrions, worked by men turning cranks, and which produce a surprising—not to say deafening—volume of sound. The tunes are in excellent taste and are quite inspiriting, but when, as frequently happens, two of the machines are well within earshot of one another, with their orchestrions playing

different airs, there is sufficient uproar and absence of harmony to make an iron foundry blush.

The favourite machine is a great ring to which bicycles are attached, the patrons by working the treadles themselves furnishing the motive power—and every time the machine starts, a



- host of disappointed applicants for bicycles have to content themselves with the position of spectators. The bicycle mania in Paris is a thing that has to be seen to be understood, and here, men, women, and children, indiscriminately fight and struggle for

the delight of riding a dozen times round a small circle, and working bicycles which can't throw them off and fall on them (as is the manner of bicycles) if they try.

But the lights are going out in one booth after the other, the crowd is dispersing, and many of the machines have ceased their mad career for the night. Here a tired mother with a babe at her breast, has fallen asleep with her head on her counter ; there an Algerian nougat seller is snoring over his tray of sweets. A *chevaux de bois* proprietor is bedding down his wooden horses with canvas sheets, and the white bears are already dreaming of ice-floes and Eskimaux and frozen Explorers. Darkness and silence invade the Fair, and will soon hold undisputed sway.



An Incident of the Wild West.

BY BERTRAM MITFORD.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEO. HUTCHINSON.

“PLAYED out ?

Injuns played out ? I reckon that’s a notion most Britishers and Down-easters hev kinder took up with. Ef these devils were to get it into their heads to start on the war-path again, they’d be the same rampageous, mischief-tearin’ varmints as ever—mind me. Injuns played out ? No, Squire. Not much, they aint—not much !”

Thus “Lone Jeff,” hunter, scout, guide, plainsman in general. By the way, I have never held the proud position of landed proprietor, but he thought “Squire” more British than Colonel, and for every reason more convenient than “Boss.” In the foreground, in picturesque grouping, stood

half-a-dozen conical *teepes*, the transitory abode of a wandering band of Brulé Sioux ; the more picturesque that they lay a couple of hundred yards from our evening camp, although there were moments when one would be sorry to swear that this distance was great enough. For ever and anon, as the light breeze circled that way, the civilised nose would become conscious of a stray whiff fraught with unnameable horrors, representing, in short, the odour inseparable from an Indian encampment. For the red brother, though not to be denied the possession of certain lovable qualities, is undoubtedly more lovable when the wind blows from you to him.

“Ef you’d been in this here section a few years back, Squire, I reckon you’d have seen what Injuns are. Not an hour of the day



but what we might have had a crowd of the pesky cusses whoopin' and tearin' around us. Say, Smoky Bear. You're all 'good' Injuns now?" turning to the one representative of the red race in general, and the Brulé village aforesaid in particular, who vouchsafed at that moment to honour our camp fire.

The red man grunted. Anything more unlike the accepted type of the "bad" Indian—otherwise the plumed and swooping centaur of the Western plains, carrying blood and pillage and fire upon the war-path—it would be hard to imagine. A hulking, squalid savage, clad in a filthy breechclout and a tattered waistcoat, his snaky locks crowned with an old peaked fore-and-aft of mine, several sizes too small for him; sprawling in ungainly attitude as he sucked away at his long redstone pipe; his small eyes twinkling with anticipation while watching Lone Jeff's efforts to scour a long-handled frying-pan, preparatory to a fry of fat bacon and succulent antelope chops, Smoky Bear was not an object calculated to inspire respect for the noble red man.



"How, how!" ejaculated the big Indian, sitting up, his heavy jaws expanding into a fearful grin as he exhibited his now empty pipe. "How, how, I good Injun, damn good Injun I! You gib me baccho, George."

The latter apostrophe being a tribute to my nationality—a vague tradition of the First Gentleman in Europe—and his namesakes—having apparently lingered among these children of Nature. But something in the ludicrous assertion seemed to have struck a chord in Lone Jeff's memory, for he had ceased his efforts with the frying-pan, and was muttering to himself, tapping that utensil meditatively against his boot.

"'Damn good Injun I,'" he repeated. "Gosh—that calls to mind poor Jake Argles and his pretty young wife! Jest what the reds said then. Lord, lord! Poor Jake—poor Jake!"

I pricked up my ears, scenting a yarn.

"Roll out the story, Jeff," I said. "It'll just keep us going till supper is ready." And rendering Smoky Bear happy by the gift of another "plug," I disposed myself comfortably to listen. Lone Jeff's life had teemed with wild and stirring incidents, and

he was a good narrator. But unless something occurred to suggest some such incident to his mind it remained untold. He never yarned for the sake of yarning.

Now, however, he reckoned that the story would keep until after supper, and accordingly what time that comfortable epoch was upon us, and the indispensable weed in full blast—our red guest the while busy lapping up the last remains of fat bacon fry—the scout proceeded thus to deliver himself.

"I've had a sight of experiences of the devilment of the reds—not that I'm down particklar on the reds; less, I calculate, than most of us as has dealings with 'em—and, mind you, their devilment's accordin' to their lights, and that's more'n can be said with truth of a good deal o' white trash that surpasses them in that same article. Well, that experience I'm going to tell you about came plaguy near bringing my own carcase to the stake," he went on, in the deliberate and subdued tones of a man indulging in serious retrospection.

"It happened in the fall of '67, when every cussed tribe on the Plains was out on the war-path. I'd been at St. Louis, tradin' pelts, and as I don't like city life, and city life don't like me, I didn't lose any time there, but concluded to leave and try and get a scouting or a guiding berth, maybe, with one of the expeditions then out against the Injuns. I took a couple of hosses for my outfit, and struck across the Plains, and by travelling careful-like, and having to every trail, I didn't meet with anything till one afternoon. The weather was clear, yet somehow it wasn't till I was nearly a high bluff overhanging a creek, whose couldn't locate quite satisfactory jest then, that half-a-dozen columns of smoke which seemed to the very bed of the creek itself.



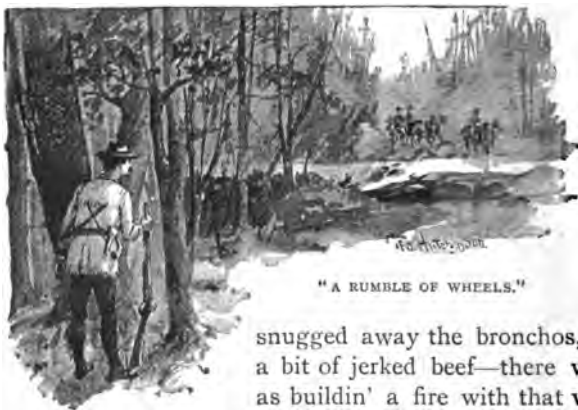
"CRAWLED
TO THE
TOP OF THE
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"'Jeff,' says I to myself, 'keep your eyes skinned if you want to keep your hair on,' and with that I crawled careful to the top of the bluff to reconnoitre. I was all alone, you see, Squire, and you may bet your sweet life my hair began to sit uncommon loose when I peeped over that bluff into the thick of a sight bigger war

party than I cared to stay and count. There they were, right below—hundreds of the devils—lyin' by for a rest and a feed, for they'd got a lot of cookin' pots going. And they were bristlin' with war-bonnets and gewgaws, and painted up in all colours, and they hadn't any squaws with 'em neither—nor dogs. The band meant mischief to a dead certainty.

"Well, I elected to give that camp a wide, wide berth, and you bet I lost no time in gettin' back to where I'd left the hosses. Luckily, the country was timbered in streaks, but if I was given a hundred dollars for every glimpse I sent behind me that afternoon I reckon I'd have a good pile to invest. By morning I must have put a good many miles between me and that war party, but the country was plaguy uncertain, and somehow I'd managed to get turned round in the night, for there'd been a bit of a fog. So



"A RUMBLE OF WHEELS."

I concluded to lie *cached* awhile in a timber belt which lay along a creek, which I took to be the head waters of the Cimarron, and think out the position.

"Well, I'd jest snugged away the bronchos, and was gnawin' a bit of jerked beef—there was no such thing as buildin' a fire with that war party hangin' around—when what should I hear but a rumble of wheels, and there, on the far side of the creek, coming down to the crossing, was one of them light spring waggons that a couple of hosses'll whisk along, and four'll run away with. There was a chap riding in front leading a spare hoss, and one in the waggon drivin'—and beside him—thunder and snakes! it made me turn cold when I was sure of it—I made out a woman. A white woman—and that war party in the neighbourhood!

"By that time the outfit had come through the crossing, and was makin' ready to camp. So I stepped out of the timber and showed myself, and they weren't sorry to see me, you bet—not half as sorry as I was to see them. For the boss of the outfit turned out to be a boy I'd known years afore—a fine, straight young feller as ever lived. He'd been clerking at Santa Fé, and

was bound for the Eastern States, where his father-in-law was going to take him into partnership—storing of some kind I reckon. The young woman with him was a sweet pretty creature, and they'd only been married three months. Great Scott! When I saw her there I'd gladly have parted with a couple of hundred dollars to know she'd got safe through her journey. Poor thing—poor thing!”

The scout paused, shaking his head gloomily over the recollection. Smoky Bear, replete with good things and blissful contentment, took the opportunity once more to ejaculate. “I good Injun; damn good Injun, Smoky Bear!” Lone Jeff scowled at this inopportune sentiment on the part of his red brother, and continued—

“Ah, well! Where was I? Well, soon as they'd camped snugly 'longside of me in the timber, and the guide, a wall-eyed Mexican-lookin' cuss, was seein' to the hosses, I took Jake Argles apart.

“‘See here, Jake,’ says I. ‘I don't particklar want to hurt your feelins, but I judge you must be making for a loonatic 'sylum in the Eastern States when you undertook to cross the Plains with that one-horse outfit. This section's a good bit full of reds, and if you get through without a desperate scrimmage it'll be more'n you deserve.’ And I told him what I'd seen the day before.

“He turned as white as a snowflake. ‘For God's sake, Jeff,’ says he, ‘don't leave us; come right along and see us through. It shan't be a question of dollars between us. And that guide of mine, José Albuquerque, ain't worth a rotten cuss—leastways he's grit enough, but hain't got no headpiece. We've been turned round a couple of times already.’ Then he told me how it was he was there. The berth he expected to take up would be the makin' of him, and the old man wouldn't hold it over. He must come at once, or chuck it altogether. So he'd concluded to start.

“I said I'd go with him; not that the dollars was in it, but, says I, ‘Jefferson G. Wragg ain't the boy to leave a pardner in a tight place. And ef you ain't in an extraordinary tight place, Jake Argles, jest call me a “tenderfoot.” I suppose you know what it means if the reds jump us, and we can't stand 'em off—what you've got to do?’ And I took a look in the direction of the young woman, who, poor thing, was lying fast asleep in the suade, as if she was tired out of her life.

"He did know, but he didn't answer, and half turned away his face. Then I let him into my plan. We calculated to remain *cached* that day, and make up all the time we could at night. There was something of a moon, and as by then I'd about got our bearings again, I reckoned that by good luck we might pull off the undertaking.

"It was about the middle of afternoon; I'd been takin' a spell of sleep, and was jest turning over for another, when I heard the young woman say—

"'Jake, there are some people riding the way we came. They are a long way off still.'

"That brought me up straight. I was wider awake now nor ever I'd been in my life, as I sent a long, steady look at the backward trail.

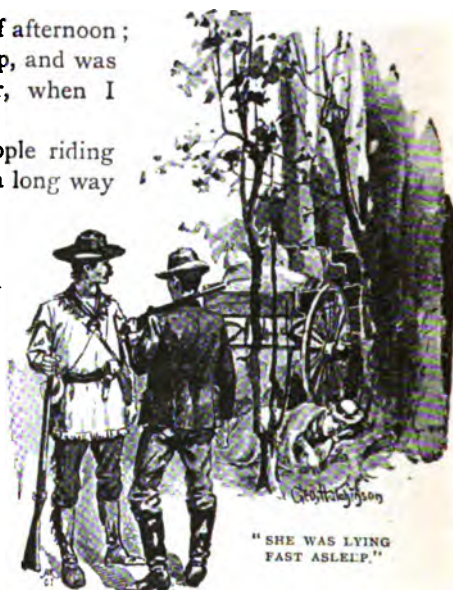
"'There, you can't see them now!' she said. 'They've disappeared in the dip. They'll be up on the bluff above the creek in a minute or two.'

"Jake and I swapped glances, and then turned to and stared that bluff out of countenance.

We stared and stared, but no sign of a hoss was there. Then all of a sudden like, I made out two specks—only specks—against the green shoulder of the bluff. Jake couldn't see 'em to save his life, but if he had I didn't need him nor anybody else to tell me what them two specks were. They were jest the heads of a couple of creepin', spyin' Injuns—that and nothin' else.

"Things didn't look blue at all now, Squire. Maybe not. Still I sorter hoped our *cache* was too snug for their pryin' eyes to discover, when through the timber close alongside, we glimpsed something that made our hearts jump into our throats, jest a thin thread of smoke, creepin' up—up—high enough to be seen for miles. That sheep head, José Albuquerque, in goin' down to the creek, had let fall a spark from his pipe, and set the dry leaves and stuff smouldering.

"'Jake,' I says, takin' him aside, 'we don't need to scare your wife too soon. But jest let's hitch up this outfit without droppin'



"SHE WAS LYING
FAST ASLEEP."

a brace of seconds, and streak for the open country. Maybe we can stand off the reds there, but if they jump us here in the timber our scalps are smoked goods already. And put your wife right inside the waggon, so as they shan't catch so much as a glimpse of her.'

"We lost no time in pulling out. There was an overland stage-station some score of miles distant—maybe less—and our best chance seemed to be to make for that. But we hadn't gone far when the bluff on t'other side of the creek was crested with mounted Injuns. On they came—pouring down the slope to the crossing.

"We reckoned there might be forty or fifty. This wasn't so bad. Maybe we could stand them off if they attacked us—which they were bound to do. We'd snatched a good start, so there was no need to bust our hosses, but theirs were darn fresh, and after a run of six or seven miles they overhauled us within hailing distance. Then one feller yells out—

"'Hi—you! Stop! I good Injun—big chief. Want say "How!" Damn good Injun I!'

"That was pretty thin, and of course we took no sort of notice. Then they set up the war-whoop, and came for us again.

"We made the bronchos skim. Jest ahead was a small butte risin' from the prairie. All open ground—jest the very place for peppering the pesky devils.

"We reached it. In mighty few seconds, we'd got the hosses tied down and some sacks of flour barricaded around the waggon. The Injuns were circling around pretty close, screechin' and whoopin', and I'd jest let go my piece and dropped one buck from his pony, when José yells out—

"'Oh, Lord, Jerusalem, boss! Here come all the Injuns in Kansas!'

"We looked up. About two miles away, stretchin' towards us at a flying gallop, came the big war party I'd happened on the



"CRESTED WITH MOUNTED INJUNS."

day before, and in about six minutes hundreds of painted, feathered devils were whoopin' around us.



"I DROPPED ONE BUCK FROM HIS PONY."

"Squire, I guessed my time had come, but what clean took the nerve out of me was the thought of that poor young woman. She crouched in the waggon, deadly white, and shivering like a quakin' asp as the reds charged nearer and nearer. They were careful and sparing in their fire, determined on taking her alive. All in the middle of that desperate scrimmage the thought of the bloody and butcherin' work that'd follow turned me deadly sick, and I felt kinder mad with Jake for throwin' her into the redskins' hands, so to say. We blazed and blazed till our shooting irons burnt our hands, and the ground itself heaved beneath the crowd of whoopin' devils whirling

and skimming to and fro. We hadn't a chance. There was more'n enough of 'em to swamp us at a rush, and they knew it. Jest as the whole crowd came yelling upon us in full charge, I saw Jake Argles step behind his wife and lift his six-shooter. It'd got to be done, you see; no white woman must ever be grabbed by the reds alive. But the poor thing looked round on him, and I reckon that unnerved him, for he dropped his hand. Jest then the crowd rushed over me, and I was knocked flying. As I lay there, I saw two bucks lug the young woman out of the waggon, and hoist her, shrieking, on to a hoss; I saw poor Argles leap to her side, and

shoot her through the heart, and at the same time his own skull was split right in two bits by a tomahawk. Then my head went round, and I seemed kind of to faint, for I'd got a whack on the head from a pony's hoof. But the horror of that poor gal's ashy face as the redskins grabbed her'll never get out of my sight long as I'm above ground."

"Well, but you were in a pretty tight place yourself," I cut in.

"That's so. When I came to, José was lyin' beside me, strapped up as hard as I was. The

reds were plundering the waggon, and seemed pleased enough with what they found, though sure it wouldn't go far among such a crowd. Some of 'em were a bit mad at being done out of a woman-prisoner, but they lit upon enough tea, and sugar, and flour, and pork for a general feast, and then there was plunder in the way of arms and ammunition, and our hosses, so they soon got good-humoured again. Well, Squire, I made up my mind to go to the Happy Hunting-grounds. The only thing was the manner of it, for a white man isn't

somehow built to stand all that cuttin' and hackin' and burnin' like them red devils, and I knew that was the look-out ahead. As I turned the thing over I heard someone say—

"'Wagh! Old Beaver is in the trap at last!'

"I looked up and saw Black Eagle, one of the head chiefs of the Kiowas, a galoot I'd stood in with rather in former times. That was my name among 'em—Old Beaver. Well, I jest said nothing, friendship not counting on the war-path. However, they didn't ill-use me, though I was kept tied, and then after setting fire to the waggon, we all started on the backward trail, leaving the bodies of poor Jake and his wife to the wolves and coyotes. While we were fording the creek, José Albuquerque, who was riding just in front of me, suddenly pitched himself over into deepish water, and being strapped tight to the pony, brought it down too. He



"I SAW HIM SHOOT HER THROUGH THE HEART."

was big and heavy, and they couldn't fish him out all at once. He was drowned, poor fellow, and that was what he wanted, because he reckoned he was booked for the squaws to torture to death.

"Well, first I guessed that'd be my own luck, for when we got back to the Injuns' village the squaws came around with knives and clubs, and set up such a screechin' and hollerin' for me that I thought I'd be strapped to the stake right away. However, Black Eagle stood out for me, and old Satanta, he was there too, and he wouldn't let me be harmed. I judged they meant makin' some use of me. They kept me there nigh on a month, and then, one night, during a big rainstorm, I saw my chance. I lifted one of the best ponies, and lit out. After lying by all day, and only moving at night, I happened on a cavalry patrol; and none too soon, neither, for it was four days since I quitted the Kiowa camp, and all that time I'd ate nothin' but a half-grown prairie chicken that I'd knocked over with a rock."

He paused. Smoky Bear, who had been snoring placidly throughout the narrative, started up and grunted out his intention to seek the shelter of his *teepe*, subjoining a request for the gift of a final "plug."

"Something that galoot said recalled the experience," went on the scout, turning to gaze after the receding form of our red guest, now lounging towards the Sioux lodges, whose blazoned sides showed fantastic in the moonlight. "But it's a 'xperience that's bound to make me feel almighty low when I do think of it, and that's a fact. I saw the poor thing's scalp—and poor Jake's too—hanging up in the camp afterwards. No—don't you go for to believe Injuns are played out. They ain't—not by more 'n a long chalk. And now, Squire—scuse me—I feel like takin' a snooze."



Scrambling Through Corsica.

BY J. N. USHER.

STARTING from Ajaccio, the amateur photographer, after taking snap shots at boulevards of palms, orange, and plane trees, mounts the cumbrous *diligence* for Sartene, some



AJACCIO.

fifty-three miles off. There is a certain element of excitement in the fact that brigandage still flourishes in Corsica; but such a trifle should never deter enthusiasts. The following pictures give a very fair idea of the island as it is to-day :

**SARTENE.****BONIFACIO.**



CORTÉ



BASTIA.

**CORSICAN WATER CARRIER.****CORSICAN BOYS.****CORSICAN BANDIT.****A CORSICAN TYPE.**



CARGESE.



CALVI.

**CALANCHES DE PIANA****PORTO.**



CAURS.



PROPRIANO.

**ERBALUNZE.****GROTTE BONAPARTE.**

The Lost Engine.

BY W. L. ALDEN.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. JACK.

"**I** WAS speaking the other day," said the Jericho station-master, "of rail-road ghosts—trains, and engines, and such—and you didn't seem to believe that there were any such things. Now, just to show you that I was telling the truth, I'll tell you about the ghost of an engine that I saw myself, and that lots of other men on this road have seen. Just wait till that train starts along, and we have thisyer station to ourselves as usual."

A way train had stopped at the station, and as the station-master spoke there suddenly fell out of the door of the baggage-car a man curiously complicated with a bicycle. The man, who was the baggage-master of the train, had managed to put his foot through the spokes of one of the wheels of the bicycle, and man and machine were writhing on the platform, the one cursing loudly, and the other giving forth the crackling sound of snapping steel rods.

"There," said the station-master, "that's what happens twice out of every three times that a man tries to handle one of those machines. Seems to me that they were invented just to make things miserable for the train-men. I tried to wheel one along the platform one day, and before I knew what was the matter, the blamed thing had throwed me, and was trying to break my legs and gouge my eyes out. They're just like a coyote. You take a coyote by the back of the neck, and hold him out at arm's length, and he'll manage to bite a piece out of the calf of your leg, or some other place that's mebbe ten feet away from his mouth. I never yet saw a baggage-master that could smash a bicycle without hurting himself worse than the machine. It ought to be made illegal to send bicycles by rail, and that's a fact."

The baggage-master finally extricated himself from the bicycle, and withdrew into his car to repair damages. The train whistled and went on its way, and the station-master, seating himself by my side, proceeded with his story.

"About ten years ago we had an engine on this road that

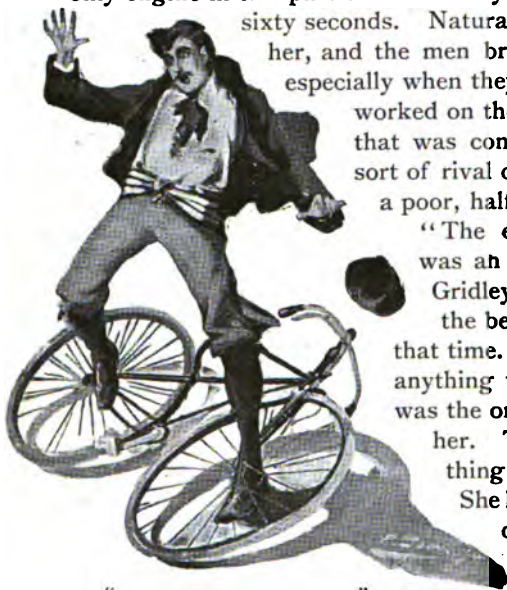
you would just have admired to see. She was 'the 'Fanny Ellsler'—that was her name, being named after one of the Queens of France, or some such place. Now-a-days we don't think that sixty miles an hour is any very great speed, but in those days, the 'Fanny,' as we called her for short, was the only engine in this part of the country that could do her mile in sixty seconds. Naturally, the road was proud of

her, and the men bragged of her continually, especially when they met any of the men that worked on the Montana Southern road, that was considered by some to be a sort of rival of our road, though it was a poor, half-bankrupt concern.

"The engineer of the 'Fanny' was an old fellow by the name of Gridley. He was allowed to be the best engineer on the road at that time. He used to be able to do anything with that engine, and he was the only man who could manage her. There was always something queer about the 'Fanny.'

She had a trick of getting tired, or of letting on that she was tired, and refusing to work. She'd be a-going along at her usual gait,

and all of a sudden she would slow down and pretty near quit making steam. No engineer except Gridley could manage her when she got these fits on. Other men that tried to run her found that the only thing they could do was to wait till she got good and ready to move on. But Gridley, he would just polish up her brasses a bit, whistling some cheerful tune, and now and then saying something pleasant to her, and all of a sudden she would just hump herself and travel along as if there had never been anything the matter. After the superintendent got to know the 'Fanny' pretty well, he would never allow anybody except Gridley to take her out of the yard. He used to run her the length of the road twice a day, except Sundays, and when he was taking a holiday. You see, he was a very peculiar man, was thishyer Gridley. He never drank a drop while he was at work, and as a general thing he would keep perfectly sober for



"COMPLICATED WITH A BICYCLE."

six or eight months. Then his mother, or his wife, or his sister would die, and he would ask for three days' leave to go to the funeral and settle up the estate. The superintendent knew as well as Gridley did what was the matter, but he would always give him his three days, and Gridley would go away and get drunk enough to satisfy him for the next six months. He and I were great friends, and many's the ride I've taken with him on his engine, just to keep him company when I had a couple of spare hours, and I had a good many of them at that time, owing to not having any permanent berth on the road, and just keeping myself ready to fill in wherever there might happen to be a vacancy.

"One morning Gridley comes to me, looking about as scared as ever I saw a man look. 'What's the matter?' says I, beginning to fear that some serious accident had happened on the road.

"'The "Fanny" is lost!' says he.

"'What do you mean?' says I. 'Has your mother been dying again? If that's the case I'm sorry, for she died last time only six weeks ago.'

"'I went into the engine-house at Spartansville this morning,' says he, speaking slow and dazed-like, 'and the "Fanny" wasn't there. You know she goes into the engine-house every night at seven-thirty, and last night I put her in as usual, and stayed while the fireman banked the fires. When we left there was nobody in the place, and, as you know, nobody ever goes near it during the night. This morning at five-fifteen I went down to bring her out, and she wasn't there. The fireman had been about five minutes ahead of me, and he was as much astonished as I was.

"'Well, we easy enough found that she wasn't anywhere in Spartansville, and then we inquired after her by telegraph. There wasn't a blessed station on the road that had seen hide or hair of her. The superintendent has started in a special from Athensville, and is going the whole length of the road to see if there is any signs of her having been taken out and ditched, but he'll never find her.'

"'What on earth do you cal'late has become of her?' said I.

"'There was always something queer about that engine,' says Gridley. 'You know what queer ways she had, such as you never knew any other engine to have. It's my belief that either she wasn't a genuine engine at all, but just the ghost of

one, and that she's gone back to where she came from ; or else, if that isn't what is the matter with her, she has been stole.'

" 'How's a man going to steal a locomotive ? ' says I. ' Do you cal'late that some chicken stealer got into the engine-house at night, and carried the " Fanny " off under his coat ? ' "

" 'No, I don't,' says Gridley, 'but mebbe some of those chaps of the Montana Southern road has got tired of hearing us brag about the " Fanny," and has come up here and carried her off.' "

" 'Carried her off in a bag or in a wheelbarrow,' says I, for I thought Gridley was talking nonsense. "

" 'Didn't you ever hear how Tom Sharpe—him that was superintendent of the Confederate Railroads during the war—came to Harper's Ferry one night with about four hundred yoke of oxen, and dragged a dozen locomotives belonging to the Baltimore and Ohio road off across country till he struck a Virginia railroad? What's been done once can be done again.' "

"There was no use talking with Gridley about the thing, and so I let him have his own ideas. As far as I was concerned I didn't have any ideas whatever on the subject. I didn't

believe that the engine was a ghost, for I had made too many trips on her not to be sure that she was good honest steel and brass. And I didn't believe that she had been hauled across the country by ox-teams, for in that case her tracks would have been left on the road, and there weren't no tracks visible anywhere. The thing just seemed to me to be a big mystery, and when a thing's a mystery the less you think about it the better. However, I



"THE 'FANNY' IS LOST!"

couldn't help thinking about this thing, for the whole road talked of nothing else for the next week. It even got into the Chicago newspapers, where, of course, everybody thought it was only a reporter's lie. The superintendent spoke to me about it himself, for I happened to meet him down at Tiberius Centre when he was on the search for the 'Fanny,' and I could see that it was his belief that she had been stolen. I told him fair and square that it was a mystery, and that he would have to wait till he got to a better world before he would find out the truth about it.

"Gridley wouldn't take another engine. He said that unless he found the 'Fanny' he would never touch a lever again, and, as he had nothing particular to do, he started in to make up lost time in drinking whisky. I didn't see him for pretty near two months, and they told me that he had gone on a hunt for the 'Fanny,' and probably wouldn't ever return. But one day who should come to my boarding-house here in Jericho but Gridley, looking thin and ragged and dirty. However, he was sober enough, though he was more excited than I had ever known him to be, engineers being men that very seldom ever allow anything to excite them.

"'I've found the "Fanny,"' says he, in a sort of whisper.

"'Well! I want to know!' says I, for I was mightily astonished.

"'It was the Montana Southern that stole her,' said he. 'She's down at West Saragossa, not ten miles from here. I saw her there yesterday myself. They've lacquered all her brass-work black, and they've given her a new smoke-stack, and they've changed her name to the "Pocahontas," and her own builder wouldn't know her. But I knew her just as soon as I heard her puff. She's hauling the express on the Southern road, and she lays up at West Saragossa at night, and I want you to come down with me to-night, and we'll steal her.'

"'Why don't you tell the superintendent and let him put in a claim for her?' I asked.

"'Because he couldn't never prove that she is the "Fanny." The Southern road owns the judge before whom the case would be tried, and they'd have a hundred witnesses to swear that she wasn't the "Fanny." No, sir! she has got to be stole, and I know now just how to get her on to our track.'

"'How's that?' says I.

"'Don't you remember,' says Gridley, 'that down the road

about seventy miles from here, the Southern track runs parallel



"LACQUERED HIS BRASS-WORK BLACK."

to ours for
a spell,
and only
about
twenty
yards
away?

When
the
"Fanny"
was stole she
was taken to
this hyer place,
and the rails were
unspiked and led
across to the South-
ern track. It's easy
enough to do, and
we'll do the same. I want
you to come along because
you know a fireman's duties
middling well, and I won't
trust any of our firemen on a
job of this kind.'

"Well, I said I would
go, and we took a horse and
buggy and drove over to
West Saragossa that after-

noon good and early, so as to see how the land lay. When
night came on we went out of town a bit, and stayed in the

woods till about one o'clock, and then we crept down to the engine-house, and shoved the 'Fanny' out by putting our backs to her, and when we had got her on the main track we climbed aboard and let her run down the grade, which is middling steep just out of the village, while I worked at the fires and got them to going good and bright.

"We had about sixty-five miles to run, and Gridley said that according to the time-table there was no train that would be in our way, unless it might be a wild cat. That's just what I cal'lated there would be, and the idea of running full speed along a strange track in the dead of night didn't suit me as well as some things might. We got the 'Fanny' up to about forty-five miles an hour, which was pretty good considering that I wasn't by any means a first-class fireman. Long before we got to a station Gridley would turn on the whistle and keep it screeching enough to wake the dead. I shut my eyes every time we came near a station, for I expected that something would be in the way, or that a switch would be turned wrong, or that something would happen to smash Gridley and me for good and all. But everybody at the stations thought that we were a special, and had everything made clear for us as soon as they heard the whistle.

"We had been running about half-an-hour when all of a sudden Gridley sings out, 'Brakes, quicker'n lightning,' and reverses the engine. We came to a halt, and Gridley says to me, 'There was a tramp lying asleep with his head on the track. We've cut him into a thousand pieces.' The man was trembling, and I began to understand that the drink had been telling on him. 'Let her go,' says he in another minute; 'what's done can't be helped.' So in a few minutes more we were a-booming along again, old Gridley leaning out and straining his eyes ahead and keeping his hand on the lever. Presently he sings out 'Brakes' again, and brings the engine up with a jump. 'Another tramp,' says he. 'What in all creation do they mean by sleeping on the track in this way?' Then I saw that Gridley had the horrors, and I was mighty sorry I had ever agreed to come with him.

"The same thing happened five minutes later. Says Gridley, 'The whole blessed track is covered with tramps. I can see seven ahead of us now.' With that he seemed to get into a sudden rage, and turns on his whistle, and says to me, 'I'll stop no more for them fellows. They are doing it on purpose

to hinder us, so that we can get caught.' Then he pulls her wide open and we swung along, the fires roaring, and the whistle doing its level best.

"Gridley kept looking out ahead and muttering. 'There's more of 'em,' said he, without turning to look at me. 'There's more than I can count. Women, too. They're lying every one right straight across the track. There! I felt her jump when she struck that fellow. Come here, Harry, and take this lever for a minute while I take a drink. Thishyer slaughter is more than I can stand.'

"I told Gridley to take his drink, and make sure it was a big one, for I saw that he had got the triangles pretty bad, and hoped that whisky might pull him through till we should get quit of the Southern road. It didn't do him much good, however, unless it was to make him more reckless than ever. He insisted on my shoving all the coal into the furnace that she would burn, and before long we were going a good sixty miles an hour and more.

"Now, just before we got to the place where the two roads ran parallel, there was a siding that had been built to reach a gravel pit. The siding began at a little station called Pekin, and was, as I should judge, about two miles long. The Montana Southern people had taken the alarm by this time, and a dispatch had come to every station on the line, warning them that a runaway locomotive was coming, and telling them to stop her the best way they could. The station-master at Pekin got this order just before we hove in sight, and he thought of the old siding. He got to work and turned the rusty old switch that had been spiked down, and when we came along we shot on to the siding, and away we went for the gravel pit.

"The track was mighty rough, and I begged Gridley to slow her down, for I thought every minute that we should be off the track. But he wouldn't listen to me. That there massacre of tramps that he thought he had made excited him more and more, and now he'd taken to singing and shouting at the top of his lungs. The 'Fanny' was swaying from side to side, and jumping almost clean off the rails when she struck a particularly rough place, and I don't mind saying that I just went to saying my prayers with every inch of pressure I could get to bear on them.

"It had been a cloudy night, but as I was praying for all I was worth, I saw that just ahead of us the track came to

an end, and there was a deep hollow of some kind. I made up my mind that I had had enough of that sort of rail-roading. Yelling to Gridley to jump I put the brake hard on, and went off into a ditch full of briars on the left-hand side of the road. I fell into water and soft mud, and didn't sustain

no mortal injury to speak of, but before I could pick myself up the engine was gone. I scrambled on my legs and ran to see what had become of her. She and Gridley had gone clean out of sight. The bottom of the gravel pit was covered with water, but what was worse, as I afterwards found out, there was a big quicksand there, which had been the reason why

the gravel pit was abandoned. The 'Fanny Ellsler' went down into that quicksand, and, for all I know, has kept on sinking ever since, with skeleton standing with his hand on

"Well, I came whole story to ent, and he, about the quick-knew there was in searching for

engine. So he told me to keep quiet about the thing, so as not



"BRAKES QUICKER 'N LIGHTNING."

she
ing
Gridley's
in the cab
the lever.
home and told the
the superintend-
knowing
sand,
no use
the



"I FELL INTO WATER."

to give the Montana Southern people any satisfaction, which accordingly I did ; but after a while the thing got to be known somehow or other, as things always will, no matter what you may do."

"Much obliged to you for the story," said I, "but you promised me a ghost story, and I don't exactly see where the ghost comes in."

"I haven't got to that yet," replied the station-master. "A year afterwards I was down in the neighbourhood of Pekin, and as I was driving along in a buggy, pretty late at night, I saw an engine come flying down that old siding and plump into the gravel pit. Leastways, I saw it disappear just when I reached the jumping-off place. If that wasn't the ghost of the 'Fanny,' I'd like to know what it was. Moreover, the boys along the Southern road told me that time and time again they had seen that same engine come hustling along at sixty miles an hour, and disappear into the quicksand. Now, if that wasn't a ghost, what was it?"

"I won't undertake to say," said I ; "only if there hadn't been another line parallel to the old siding, and if that line hadn't been in regular use by ordinary healthy trains and engines, I might feel a little more sure than I do now that what you saw was a ghost, and not a special engine on the Montana Southern road."





"WE USED TO WELCOME HIM BACK WITH TACT."

On the Betrothal of Brothers.

BY EVELYN SHARP.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY F. MABELLE PEARSE.

WE always called him our clever brother. We fell down and worshipped him the day he got his first article in a paper, and it is my private opinion that we have never straightened our backs since. I don't quite know why we thought him clever. I think it was partly because at one time he "broke out artistic," so to speak, and used to wear a dandelion for a buttonhole, and a raw-edged piece of faded silk



"BROKE OUT ARTISTIC."

for a tie, and show other symptoms of a current culture now archaic. But the chief reason was that for weeks together he declined to speak to any of us, except when the rigorous necessities of meal-time demanded speech; we loved to think he was communing with his genius during these epochs of silence, and we felt quite sorry for him when he had to ask for the mustard or the anchovy sauce. Our father didn't believe in any genius that was not paid for, and hinted darkly at

bad temper ; our mother made many excuses for him and gave him a tonic. When he grew tired of the lofty and monotonous society of his genius, we used to welcome him back again with tact and gratitude. I do not remember that we ever alluded to the weeks of silence that had passed, which would have been more human if less politic. Of course, he never went to dances ; they were far too conventional for him, for one thing ; and he could not dance, for another, though I do not know that he ever urged this as a reason for not going. But we did not want him to wear picotees and take us out in the evening ; any ordinary brother could have done that, and *he* was our "clever brother."



"'TERRIBLE CLOSE.'"

Then he got engaged, like any other Benedick or any other brother ; and, like any other sisters, we prepared to hate his fiancée in our hearts, and to conceal our hatred from him. Not that he would have noticed it, for he did not notice us at all just then, except for the purposes of comparison. He told my musical sister that she would never know what music was until she heard his betrothed sing ; he looked at my short curls, which used to please him so much, and told me, without comment, to notice her "crown of hair." There always is a crown of some sort about a brother's fiancée : hair, or beauty, or something that doesn't cost much. He even went as far as the place in which she lived, and raved about the North of England until we nearly hated ourselves for being his untalented, unmusical, uncrowned sisters who lived in the South.

Everyone expected the wedding to be scintillating with eccentricity. But our clever brother took a strange pleasure in disappointing people, and it was held after all in an ordinary village church, or at least as ordinary a village church as there could be in the North Country ; and the only vagary of which he was guilty was to give each of the bridesmaids an orchid instead of a bouquet, which some uninitiated person in the crowd

(who must have come originally from the South) was heard to pronounce "terrible close." So that was the end of our clever brother. I do not mean that it killed him off at once, but it gave him in course of time a house, with bath-room pipes, and a something termed a "range," and a baby called William. We should not have minded so much if he had called it Dante Gabriel or Percy Bysshe, as we all suggested, but—William!

However, we had our enthusiastic brother to fall back upon; and our enthusiastic brother had hobbies, and showed no sign of including matrimony among them. The worst ones he ever had were socialism and metaphysics. The socialism possessed him first. It appeared to be very violent while it lasted, and was a very exclusive kind of socialism; at least, he said it was not given to many people to understand it at all, and it seemed to be meant for a race of men who didn't exist at present. He said this new kind of socialism had nothing to do with violent measures like communism; everything would have to be swept away, that was all, and we must get rid of our Norman ancestors and our blue blood, and all such traditions, and socialism would follow without any revolution at all. And then, when he had raved for some months about socialism and the elevation of mankind, he became equally possessed with metaphysics and the extinction of mankind. He contrived most ingeniously to work the two together for some time; and he used to cajole us into his room at the top of the house and read Schopenhauer, until we quite agreed that life was a mistake, and said so. Then he said we had missed the whole point of the theory, and explained it all over again without waiting for a wet day, so that we found it was better to agree with him silently. And yet, in spite of the misery and the evil in which he said society was steeped, he sought pleasure with a freshness which was certainly unworthy of a serious metaphysician.

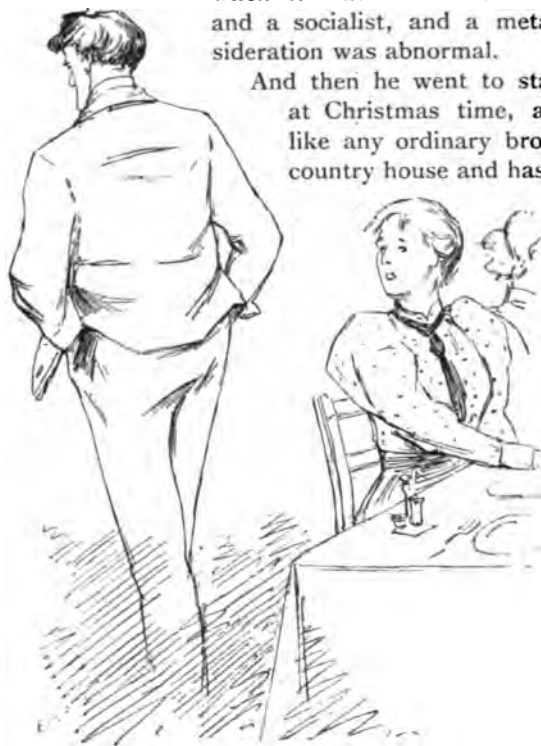


"VERY VIOLENT WHILE
IT LASTED."

He took us to as many dances as we pleased, and he never minded if he could not find us at the end of the evening when it was time to come away: in a brother, and a socialist, and a metaphysician, such consideration was abnormal.

And then he went to stay with some friends at Christmas time, and met his fate just like any ordinary brother who stays in a country house and has never read a word of

Schopenhauer. *She* lived in the West of England, so we had a change as far as locality went; but there was a sameness about the rest of it as there always is. *She* was tall, a fact I gathered from his first remark on his return to town: "Well, you *are* a little thing! Haven't you shrunk or something?" And he tried absently to find my waist somewhere about my head. "*She* wore glasses, but *She*



"HOW YOU DO HAMMER AT A SUBJECT!"

did not look blue in them as I did in mine," he said; that was merely to work off his annoyance at my doing something that *She* did. One day, it was a wet one I remember, I mentioned Schopenhauer—poor, forgotten, discarded Schopenhauer.

"I suppose she is great on metaphysics," I said, carelessly. He coughed a little.

"Well, no, not exactly that—yet. Of course," he added, quickly, "there is plenty of time for that, and her mind has developed in other ways, you see. You should hear her play——"

"I will when she comes to town. But about the metaphysics," I pursued, relentlessly; "didn't you have any wet days in the

holidays, or does it never rain in the West of England? I suppose the subject was crowded out, though?"

Enthusiasts are no good at concealing anything.

"We—we did mention it a little," he confessed; "in fact I felt it was only right to give her some of my views on marriage, and our engagement was a little delayed in consequence." (It had all been arranged in a week, but I wondered how it had not been deferred for ever.) "However, it's all square now. And, after all, metaphysics are not everything," he added, with some show of boldness.

"Then she doesn't approve of Schopenhauer?" rather nastily.

"How you do hammer at a subject" (crossly). "When you see *Her* you will understand how difficult it was not to hurt her feelings. You don't know what these highly-strung artistic natures are; and her ancestors came over with the Conqueror" (very proudly), "and when people have blue blood in their veins——"

"They can't swallow metaphysics and socialism in a lump. But I'm glad I needn't think it is wrong to be happy any more; do you know, I really thought, from what you said before you were engaged, that love and marriage were delusions. I suppose I must have missed the point again." I felt I deserved that little bit of revenge. But he unconsciously turned my weapons against myself.

"I wouldn't worry about marriage if I were you; it doesn't immediately concern you, does it?"

"Oh no," I assented, cheerfully; "it isn't everyone who has artistic natures, and blue blood, and Norman ancestors, is it?"

"Never mind, dear," he said, as kindly as he could; "she can't cook a bit, or do any of those useful things. And lots of people seem very happy without being married, you know."

I suppose nothing can be done?



"I HAPPENED TO MEET ROSS THAT SAME EVENING."

The Burrell Libel Case.

BY R. H. SHERARD.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY R. JACK.

WHEN I had finished my cursory examination of the manuscript, I laid it down on the table, and, shaking my head, said :

"I am sorry to disappoint you, old fellow, but I should most strongly advise you not to try any publisher with this story. I don't think that there is the slightest chance of its being accepted anywhere. At the same time, I must say that for a first attempt it does you great credit, and certainly if you stick to your work you will soon be able to produce something that will be successful."

"I tell you that that book is going to be the biggest success of the year," answered Martin Ross, in whose rooms in the Middle Temple we were sitting.

We had been at Oxford together and had gone down about the same time, I to take my place on a newspaper, and Ross to try his fortune in the City. Although undoubtedly sharp, he had succeeded in nothing, and I had been under the impression that he had emigrated, when that afternoon I met him in the Strand, and he told me that he had written a novel, which was to make his fortune. It was at his invitation that I had accompanied him home to look over the manuscript in question.

It was a very poor story, slovenly and amateurish in style, and vulgar beyond criticism. I felt sorry to have to discourage him, but it was only friendly on my part to do so. I accordingly repeated, in an answer to his remark, "I am quite certain that no London publisher would undertake that book, though I am sorry to say so."

He laughed and said : "I never said that I should offer it to any publisher. I am not such a fool. I want all the profits myself. Why should I put the lion's share of them into a publisher's pockets. There are thousands in that book, and I'm going to publish it myself, that is to say at my own expense, and I shall put it into the hands of one of those firms who publish on commission."

"My dear fellow," I cried, "do let yourself be guided by me, and don't spend any money on printing that book. I don't believe that a hundred copies of it would be sold."

"No, not a hundred," he answered, confidently; "a hundred thousand is nearer the mark, though I expect the sale to go much higher than that. I tell you that I am to make my fortune out of that book; that I have struck oil this time, and richly."

"But the style," I urged.

"Oh, I know that the style isn't up to much," he answered. "I'm no hand at literature, and, as a matter of fact, I took the least possible trouble over writing this book. I dashed it off on the typewriter in less than a week. But it isn't on its merits as a work of art that this book is going to sell."

"Well, as what then?" I asked.

"Why does So-and-So's pill, and So-and-So's soap sell? Because they are well advertised. Well, my book's going to be well advertised, and, accordingly, will sell."

"I fear you will have to spend a very large sum of money to advertise that book into success," I remarked.

"I know exactly what I shall have to spend. Sixpence-halfpenny per dozen copies, or a little over a halfpenny on each copy. Each halfpenny and fraction so spent will sell a copy. The book will be produced as cheaply as possible, and I calculate the cost to me at about twopence. Say that, with the advertising, each copy costs me threepence, which is above the mark, you may calculate what my profits will be on a sale of even one hundred thousand copies."

"You have hit on some novel mode of advertising the book, then?"

"You bet; the whole reason of my confidence in my success of this shocker is there."

"Would you mind telling what your plan is?"

"Well, if you won't mind, I'd rather not," he answered. "You see, I can't afford to give away the idea. You might talk about it, and then some other fellow might snap it up. Don't be offended, and just watch the sales of 'A Disgrace to Society'—that is the title I have decided upon. They will make you open your eyes."

"Very well, just as you please," I said, rather coldly, rising to take my departure.

I did not see Ross again for some weeks, for, though I called once or twice at his rooms in the Temple, I always found his oak sported. One day the inner door happened to be open, and through the letter-slit I could see into his sitting-room. There were six young ladies seated at a large table busily writing, and

in front of each was a high pile of cards. Two large baskets, filled with similar cards, stood on the floor.

Business taking me abroad, I was not present at the birth of the book on which my friend had built such hopes; and though I looked in the London papers, I could find neither advertisement nor mention of it. I was, therefore, rather surprised when, on landing at Dover on my return home, I saw quite a heap of the shilling volumes of "A Disgrace to Society" on the bookstall at the station. At the Victoria bookstall I saw another heap of the same book, and on asking the clerk how this book was selling he answered: "Like hot cakes." Driving home, I saw it well in evidence at various bookshops. It was evidently a big success, and I wondered rather enviously how Ross had managed to obtain this for so very worthless a production. I had purchased a copy at Victoria, and, looking over it in the cab, had had my first opinion of it confirmed. It was a wretched piece of work, and, moreover, disgracefully produced; badly printed on cheap paper, and so carelessly bound that long ere I reached my lodgings it had come to pieces in my hand.

"However has he managed it?" I cried, as I remembered the very small sales that my books, on which I had spent so much time and trouble, and which had been published by some of the first houses in London, had reached.

The mystery was solved to me as I looked over the pile of letters which had collected during my absence. Amongst these was a thin post-card, addressed in an unfamiliar hand, upon which was written the following communication:—

"DEAR SIR,—A sincere friend considers it his duty to point out to you that you are cruelly and scandalously libelled in a miserable shilling book called 'A Disgrace to Society,' pub-



"I AM TO MAKE MY
FORTUNE."

H H



"SEATED AT A LARGE TABLE BUSILY WRITING."

lished by Messrs. Anderson & Maitland. You owe it both to yourself and to your friends to take measures to put a stop to the circulation of these falsehoods about you.

"A TRUE WELLWISHER."

Now as soon as I had read this, having in the meanwhile forgotten all about Ross and his book, my first impulse was to rush out to the nearest bookstall, and to ask for a copy of the work referred to. Then, suddenly, it flashed across my mind that I had the book in my pocket, and, remembering what I had seen at Ross's rooms, I began to understand the advertising scheme of which he had spoken so sanguinely and which, according to what I had seen, and my own impulse at the moment I had read the post-card, seemed decidedly an effectual one.

I happened to meet Ross that same evening, just as he was alighting from a hansom outside a fashionable Regent Street café. As soon as he saw me he rushed up and cried out: "What did I tell you, old chap? Is it a success or is it not? We are printing the sixtieth to seventieth thousand at this moment."

"I suppose that it is to you I owe this highly interesting missive?" I said, holding out the post-card that I had received.

Ross glanced at it and, turning rather red, said: "I didn't know that your name was in the Directory, or I would have given instructions that you were not to be written to. Not that it matters much now that the success of the book is assured. Well, yes, that was the idea, and famously it has worked, as you have seen. We sent cards to everybody in the "Who's Who," in the Clergy List, in the Court section of the London Directory, and in the Law List. Of course, everybody who received a card immediately rushed off to the nearest bookseller to get the book and to find out how it referred to him. You see, everybody has more, or less of a skeleton in his cupboard, and there you are, don't you know. A fresh batch of post-cards is going out to-night. Tell me, what do you think of the idea?"

"I don't know," I said. "It's original, certainly. Perhaps on the point of taste——"

"Oh, taste be hanged," cried Ross. "Money is the thing to be got, and money I am getting. That wretched little book, which I dashed off on my typewriter in a fortnight, has already brought me in over four hundred pounds, and I wouldn't sell my interest in it at present for twice as much again. And then look what a start it gives me as a literary fellow. Won't the

publishers be after me soon, Ross the author of the book which, without being advertised or reviewed in the papers, ran through over one hundred editions in six weeks. I tell you my fortune is made, thanks to that happy thought of mine."

I said nothing, and shortly afterwards quitted him.

His sanguine hopes were not destined to realisation, and this by a curious example of the irony of fate. On the very



"A LIBEL ON HIM!"

next day after I had met him, a suit for libel was commenced against him by a clergyman in the North of England named Burrell, who, having his attention called to a libel on him, in the form of a story, in which the names were so thinly disguised as to be recognisable by anyone of his acquaintances, and, seeing in the story a malicious and grossly exaggerated version of certain circumstances which had occurred in his family, instructed his solicitor to commence proceedings. Whilst these were pending, the publishers, to reduce their responsibility to the lowest degree possible, suspended the sale of the book, in spite of the fact that the demand for copies increased daily. Very heavy damages were claimed by the plaintiff. The affair was, however, settled out of court, a settlement which left Ross considerably out of pocket by his first and last literary venture.

"I never heard of this fellow Burrell in my life," he told me mournfully. "The story, such as

it was, came straight out of my head. But, of course, I couldn't go into court and give myself away. The laugh would have been against me."

And so, no doubt, it would have been.

Eric Mackay.

BY BAYNTON BOYLE.

"The Love Letters of a Violinist, and other Poems," by Eric Mackay, are the handiwork of a brilliant metrical artist and poet born. The poem is quite original, its manner Elizabethan, freshened by a resort to the Italian fountain from which the clearest streams of English song so often have flowed. Mackay's poetic ability is of varied range. He is a natural lyrist, with a singing faculty, a novel metrical turn, such as few recent lyrists have at command. . . . There is a fine impulsive spirit animating all."—EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN, in "Victorian Poets."

FOR some years past Mr. Eric Mackay has dwelt in a sunny suburb of Kensington. Here his mornings are devoted to literary work, the afternoons and evenings to Club life and Society. Every poet has his own individual methods of composition—methods which stimulate the flow of the imagination—and Mr. Mackay is no exception to this rule. The noise of London does not disturb him when he walks to and fro in the parks, fixing his conceptions in words, and polishing the lines until they attain the required standard of felicitous phrase and thought. He is a man of medium height, with frank, open features, and has a singularly pleasant, cordial manner, with just a tinge of the courtier and man of the world. He speaks rapidly, as if the eagerness of his thought followed almost too quickly for expression, and has all the sensitiveness of the poetic nature—that sensitiveness which pricks the skin of the bard, yet fails to penetrate the epidermis of the seasoned interviewer. He is dowered with the poet's "hate of hate" for enemies, but is a warm friend withal, and so good-natured that he is always ready to bury the hatchet. His



MR. ERIC MACKAY.

greatest poetical success is "The Love Letters of a Violinist," of which over 30,000 copies have been sold. "Isn't that a very large number for a volume of modern verse?" I asked one afternoon as we sat chatting together.

"Well, yes, it seems so," he answered. "The book was first published by Messrs. Field & Tuer, in a quaint, missal-like volume, tied with silk strings—long since out of print. The popular issues, including the ninth edition, brought the total of sales up to over thirty thousand copies, as you say. But I do not gain any financial advantage from them, as I gave free permission to Walter Scott to include the book in his "Canterbury Poets," never for a moment supposing that it would meet with such singular approval. It is now, I am informed, one of the best—if not the best—selling of all the volumes included in the series. The honour of being thus placed in the company of the classic English poets is not without its disadvantages though, for in some quarters I am, it appears, thought to be a past writer of the Elizabethan period, and am not counted with my contemporaries at all! This is flattering, of course, but not always agreeable. For instance, I have found that the mistaken impression of my not being alive moves certain persons to occasional kleptomania."

"Indeed! How is that?"

"I will quote you cases in point. Two gentlemen, in different parts of the world,—doubtless believing me to be far beyond all possibility of defending myself,—copied out my lines, 'Beethoven at the Piano,' and sent them to different newspapers as their own composition. One of these individuals resided in the Lake district. He forwarded my poem, signed with his own name, to a local paper, and added an explanatory foot-note to the effect that he had 'dreamt it' on a certain 'inspired night.' Called to account for his theft he was very bitter about it, and wrote letters in the aforesaid paper complaining of the manner in which he was being 'hounded down' by a malignant person calling himself Eric Mackay, whose name he had never heard of. Pressed gently yet firmly by the hand of the law, he gave in, declaring that he frequently had 'lapses of memory' in which he was 'not accountable for his actions'; and, furthermore, that, if any legal steps were taken he would be unable to pay, as he had 'no money even to pay for a lodging.' After this grovelling admission, I of course let him off, with a warning not to 'dream' with me again."

"And the other case?"

"Oh, that was an American flute-player. He sent part of the same poem, 'Beethoven at the Piano,' to the *Musical Times* as his own production. When I claimed it, and proved my claim, he wrote me a most insulting letter, threatening to abuse me in every American paper, and remarking that 'the pen was *smitier* than the sword.'"

"And all this because you claimed your own?"

"Exactly. But what does it matter? The 'smiter' in these



THE WRITING DEN.

cases ends by smiting himself; and the flute-player has covered himself with ridicule."

"But you have written many volumes of poems. Which one followed the 'Love Letters'?"

"A volume entitled, 'A Lover's Litanies,' which was first of all issued by Field & Tuer. Afterwards it was included in the 'Lotos' series published by Kegan Paul, the same in which the 'Light of Asia' has also appeared. For some unexplained reason Messrs. Kegan Paul have discontinued these 'Lotos' volumes, and no longer advertise my book or make known

its existence, so I intend to bring out a new edition shortly."

"And your other books? Did you not write a blank-verse tragedy in five acts?"

"Yes; 'Nero and Actéa.' It narrowly escaped being accepted by Irving for performance at the Lyceum Theatre. The great manager objected that I did not make Nero drunk. 'Can't you introduce a drunken scene?' he inquired, after we had talked the matter over in his sanctum. I replied that I could; but the play was not accepted, and, as soon as my manuscript was returned to me, I had it printed and published.

"Your 'Gladys the Singer' was published before the tragedy, was it not?"

"It was; and so were the 'Choral Ode to Liberty' and 'The Song of the Flag.'"

"And now—it's treading on delicate ground—what about the reviewers. Have they dealt gently with you?"

The poet smiled. "Why, of course! Don't they treat everybody well? and aren't they the most generous fellows imaginable? I have nothing to say against them. They have generally made a point of leaving out my name altogether in their lists of 'Minor Poets,' for which I am duly grateful, and they have never 'boomed' me—another cause for gratitude."

"Then there was your 'Royal Marriage Ode.' Didn't that create some little discussion?"

"Well, yes—rather! Some people seemed to grudge my having written it, and a good deal of ill-humour was manifested in some quarters of the press at the success it achieved; for it certainly succeeded in giving satisfaction to those for whom it was intended, and that was quite sufficient for me. I wrote it out of no desire for self-advertisement, but simply for pleasure in the subject. Nothing, I should think, is more difficult than to write verse for an occasion like a Royal marriage, but I had met and conversed with the Duke of York and liked him for himself as a man, quite apart from his exalted position. His frank, unaffected, pleasant manners, and his straightforward conversation took my fancy immensely. As I had become acquainted with the Prince of Wales at the same time, and had experienced the charm of his well-known geniality and courtesy, it was with me a matter of personal pride and satisfaction to write the ode for the Duke's marriage. I was very well rewarded by the letters of acknowledgment

and acceptance I received from many members of the Royal Family on this occasion. More kindly expressed, more courteous letters it would be impossible to imagine; those from the Royal bride and bridegroom were particularly charming."

"Wasn't it recited somewhere?"

"Yes. Hermann Vezin did it before a large audience. His delivery of it was extraordinary and impressive, being one prolonged and stately roar. I shall never forget his recital of certain lines, especially those about the flowers."

"Can you quote them?"

"Yes, I think I can. They run as follows:—

‘And while the amorous bells about us ring,
We dream of flowers that grow for us in May;
The mignonette that loves a lonely spot,
The jasmine pale, the blue forget-me-not
That looks with little eyes all down the lanes
To watch for happy swains;
And daisies with the wimples they have on
That drink the dews and drowsiness of dawn.’

Heavens! Talk of the flowers—they might have been swords and guns from the fierce clatter he made. However, he meant well."

"Did you not meet Frederic Mistral,—the great poet of Provence,—during your stay on the Riviera last winter?"

"No," replied Mr. Mackay, "I did not meet him. We exchanged books and wrote letters to each other."

"Have you one you could show me?"

"Certainly. There is one here among my papers." And the author of the "Love Letters" produced a note delicately written, which I herewith transcribe verbatim:—

Monsieur et excellent confrère.—C'est par erreur qu'on vous a annoncé ma venue à Cannes pour cette saison; je regrette que mes occupations ne me permettent pas ce joli voyage, car j'aurai été enchanté d'aller vous serrer la main. Les poètes de partout sont nos frères d'âme les plus naturels. Mon ignorance de votre belle langue anglaise m'empêche de goûter vos "Love-Letters," mais les poèmes Italiens que vous avez eu la bonne idée d'ajouter à votre volume me revelent un vrai fils de la déesse Harmonie. "La Zingarella," et "I Miei Saluti," sont des morceaux exquis, et je les trouve plus clairs, plus agréables, plus Italiens, même que bien des poésies Italiennes modernes. Je vous prie d'agréer mon poème de "Nerto," ce sera pour vous un souvenir de Provence. Recevez, cher Monsieur, l'expression de mes sentiments les plus cordiaux.

F. MISTRAL.

Feb. 22, 1894.

Mr. Mackay seemed particularly pleased at the praise accorded in this letter to his Italian poems, and I asked him whether he was writing more Italian poetry.

"No," he replied, after a moment's hesitation; "I shall in future keep to English, and English only. Is it not, after all, the noblest language spoken on earth? I am now writing a poem of some length on a great national subject."

"Will it appear this year?"

"Probably."



THE POET'S VIOLIN.

"Did not your ode on the birth of Prince Edward—the infant son of the Duke and Duchess of York—appear originally in the *Daily Telegraph*?"

"Yes; on the 25th of June; two days after the advent of the little Prince."

"And there is a cheap edition of it in book form, is there not?"

"No; there is only the *édition de luxe*—an exact replica of the copies presented to the various members of the Royal Family at home and abroad."

"It was a happy idea of yours to call it 'The White Rose of the Crown.' Have you a copy you can show me? I should like to quote from it, if you have no objection."

Mr. Mackay took from a shelf, where it stood side by side with 'The Royal Marriage Ode,' a copy of his last published poem, and I am bound to admit that a daintier volume was never issued from any press. These are some of the lines, which the admirers of Mr. Mackay will be glad to see reproduced :

"Dear England's Child ! Be thine the nation's care,
The people's love throughout the years to come
And earnest men thy servants, in the sum
Of all their deeds for ever !
Glory be thine and danger track thee never,
And Misery, from the purlieu of its lair,
Make no complaints of thee in thine estate ;
And Anarchy, whose dictum is of hate,
Collapse at sight of thee !
For Love is lord of all, in Childhood's name,
And knows not malice, or the touch of shame,
Or any lack of faith by land or sea.

Now shall be heard the heaven-saluting sound
Of patriot voices and the glad rebound
Of trump and cannon, famed in many fights
That re-announce the rights
Of sceptred Freedom, our true heritage ;
Nor shall we need a scroll or battle-gage
To prove its trustiness !
We have it safe ; and with it,—ocean wide
And clear as God has willed it,—the good news
Of leaguéd vows in lands that we possess
Out there beyond the billowy bounding tide
Where this great Flag of ours absorbs the hues
Of earth and sky and sea, as all men know ;
And how it scares the foe,
And how to keep it pure, and proud, and high,
The best of us would kiss its folds—and die ! "

"Isn't it rather singular, Mr. Mackay, that none of the other poets were 'up-to-date' on this historic occasion ?"

"Yes, it was odd, and has been much commented upon," said the author of the "Love Letters." "I was greatly surprised to find some of them celebrating the murder of President Carnot, in preference to saluting our own royal Heir. However, I am glad I was not only the first, but, by all report, actually alone in the field, especially with so vast an audience as was provided for me by the publication of the poem in the *Daily Telegraph*.

According to the first clause in the Queen's Speech for the prorogation of Parliament, the birth of an heir in the third generation to the throne "*is an event not merely propitious, but unprecedented in the history of this country;*" and I consider myself fortunate to have been the first to chronicle it in poetic form. Sir Edward Lawson, the ever kindly and genial proprietor of the *Daily Telegraph*, sent me a telegram of congratulation on the morning the Ode appeared in his paper, expressing his approval of my work—a courteous and friendly act which pleased me more than a whole column of printed praise would have done."

FAC-SIMILE OF ERIC MACKAY'S MS. FROM "THE QUELÉTZÛ."

If you think of the rush
Of the wind, and the flush
Of a morning in May when the sun is in view,
You will know what is meant by the flight from the dew
Of the first Quelétzû.

For the lark in its nest
Is a minstrel at best.
And the music it makes is the mirth of a kiss
That is flung to the skies in a frenzy of bliss
On the Morning's abyss.

As I rose to take my leave, I asked if I might look at the fine old violin which was lying on a table near, with the bow beside it. Mr. Mackay instantly handed it to me.

"Without that violin it is possible I might never have thought of the 'Love Letters,'" he said, with a smile. "They grew out of long hours spent in solitary improvising, and dreaming fantastic dreams over the music of the strings. I remember that the lines :

'And some there be who smile in Hell
For thinking of the sin that was so sweet,—'

came to me while I was playing one of Chopin's melancholy mazurkas."

And his eyes watched me jealously while I examined

what was evidently a beautiful and most valuable instrument. I made haste to restore it to its owner, who seemed relieved to get it back without injury, and returned it to its case with the tenderest care. Mr. Mackay then wrote a few lines of his lyric, "The Quelétzû" (which as yet has only appeared in the *Athenæum*), as a specimen of his handwriting, which is reproduced with this article in fac-simile. This done, we parted cordially, I having received a most agreeable impression of the poet as a man of true genius, with a fine, vigorous nature, and a winning, cheery disposition, which attracts friends about him wherever he goes.





Unfinished Stories.

BY GILBERT PARKER, G. B. BURGIN, HENRY HARLAND,
R. H. SHERARD, LOUIS TRACY, ARCHIE ARMSTRONG,
E. S. GREW, AND "AN ESCULAPIAN HOLIDAY-MAKER."

Gilbert Parker
tells a story.

When travelling, I have often noticed how little people know of their own country. They are not quick to believe in its wonders ; they rather resent your discovering themselves to themselves. Most people live their lives out in a very small circle, and imagine that their characteristics are the characteristics of their whole country. Here I am at the Book-in-Hand Hotel, Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire. Well, I hear some wonders of dialect now and then in this little place, such as a gentleman from the Surrey Hills might think alarming tricks of my imagination. But I am not disposed to give away, at this moment, my little tit-bits of Lincolnshire dialect. I am thinking of the incredulity which

greeted my articles on the Never Never Country of Australia, when they were published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and elsewhere. In these articles I set down some strange stories and some stranger modes of expression which prevail out in that country which even the "sundowner" has disowned. Sydney and Melbourne had never heard this vernacular, they had never got beyond the Darling or the Murrumbidgee, and nine-tenths of them never beyond the Hawkesbury. But for this Never Never Country, "out Tibbooburra way." I had been travelling with Quin of Tarella, good Quin of Tarella, who was a partner of Mr. Pat Lang, a brother of the admirable Mr. Andrew Lang. After a long day's travel, we had a wash, brush-up, a cup of tea, and a coil in the barracks. Now, you see, I am beginning to get my readers into difficulties, just as I got the townspeople of Australia into trouble with their own language. When Kennedy of Nuntherungie asked Quin of Tarella and myself to have a coil, I thought it was a new kind of snake-liquor. But no. Inside the barracks, Quin threw himself on a bed and coiled: which was the vernacular for sleep. But it was a long way beyond Nuntherungie that I heard the following little tale.

* * * *

Far out on Sturt's Track we halted one night at a sheep-station, had a tuck-in—or, as the aboriginal says it, "fill um bingee"—of browney, damper, and cold mutton, and then we went down to the woolshed, where was the toughest lot of shearers that ever "knocked down a cheque," or "made a town-ship dusty." By the flare of tallow dips some were playing nap, but here and there the gossips of the back-blocks were yarning, or, as they put it out Tibbooburra way, "having a reel." With our ears glued to the chinks, we heard this "painful yarn." "Ere," the shearer said, "tell ye 'ow it was. I toddles off to the shed, pulls down me tongs, 'auls out a bloomin' papillion, and was goin' down

And translates it.

the whippin' side, both blades 'eavily loaded, w'en the boss drops and shot me dead. I takes a 'op skip an' a jump back to the 'ut, puts two folds in the ol' shirallee, slings the 'og 'ide on the tall crocodile, goes up the river like a frog, sits down along Sleepy Jim's muster, and strips a hundred and forty by four o'clock next."

Is it astonishing that people at Darling Point, Sydney, and in the Dandenong Road, Melbourne, hesitated to believe? They called upon me for the interpretation thereof, and, with the help of Quin of Tarella, I gave it, as I give it here :

"This is how it happened. I walked off to the shearing shed, took down my shears, hauled out a sheep, and I was clipping down the right hand side with all my might, when the manager came and discharged me. I went back to the hut, folded up my blanket, put the saddle on my horse, galloped up the river, stopped at Sleepy Jim's sheep-pens, and shore a hundred and forty by four o'clock next day." Perhaps you would care to trace the origin of "papillion," "shirallee," &c. But let THE IDLER readers guess awhile, and then I will "guess again."

* * * *

Burgin wants to know. There is always a charm about the unexpected and the indefinite. Sometimes, however, the indefinite is rather worrying simply for the reason that one cannot get rid of it. The mere fact of not knowing how a story ends is sufficient to fill the ordinary human being with a wild and consuming desire to find out, although the circumstances may be such that it is utterly impossible for him to do so. As an instance of this, I got into a train the other day at Liverpool Street Station, and immediately fell into conversation with an exceedingly good-looking young fellow who was evidently a sailor by profession. After I had given him a match for his pipe, he became very communicative, and, as the train sped out of the station, began to yarn of the dangers.

he had passed and the many members of both sexes who had loved him on that account. This young fellow was full of the wine of life, and told as many anecdotes as a professional *raconteur*. Amid the pleasurable excitement of listening to his stories, I quite forgot to ask him the name of the station at which he intended to alight. "I should very much like to go to New South Wales," I said to him. "In the course of your wanderings were you ever there?" "Well, you see," he replied, "I was and I wasn't." "That is a pity," I said, "I should like to know something about Sydney. What do you mean by 'you were and you weren't?'" "Well," he answered, as he rammed some more tobacco into his meerschaum with his little finger, "it was in this way. When we got into Sydney Harbour I had a little difference of opinion with the first mate, so I downed him with a handspike and chucked him overboard. Then they shoved me into irons, so as to hand me over to the authorities. You see, there's lots of sharks in Sydney Harbour, so there wasn't much chance for the mate." "Oh," said I, "if you knocked him on the head with a handspike and threw him into Sydney harbour, he was probably either drowned or eaten by sharks. How did you contrive to escape all responsibility for such a crime? You don't look the sort of fellow to deliberately murder a man just for the pure fun of it." "Well, you see," he answered, "it was in this way——"

* * * *

Just at that moment the guard cried out "Edmin-ton ! Edminton !" My nautical young friend, after imploring a blessing on his optics, exclaimed, "This is my station !" flung open the door, and disappeared into the capacious bosom of his family, the members of which were waiting on the platform to receive this crime-stained youth.

The aggravating part of the story is that I have never been able to find out from that day to this :

- (1) Was the mate killed when struck by the handspike?
- (2) Was he drowned when thrown overboard?
- (3) Was he eaten by a shark?
- (4) Did he escape these deaths, and, if so, how was he rescued?
- (5) Who rescued him?
- (6) If he escaped, what was the punishment meted out to his would-be murderer?
- (7) How was it that this cheerful youth contrived to return to the bosom of his family with an unblemished character?

I shouted to my companion as the train sped out of the station, but he was already enveloped in the clerical embrace of a gentlemanly vicar, whose somewhat pragmatic countenance precluded all idea of his welcoming a prodigal son who had returned to the fold without expiating his crime. Sometimes, when I am unable to sleep at night, these foregoing questions rise up and haunt me. If by any chance "this should meet the eye" of the sea-faring youth who handspiked the first mate, I should be much obliged, if, in remembrance of the courtesies I extended to him in that railway carriage, he will kindly send me a postcard and solve my doubts.

* * * *

Harland meets a burglar. "No," said a burglar I was chatting with the other night, in the saloon-bar of a Shoreditch public, "I don't mind dogs nor keepers, no more than I mind butlers or members of the family. I kin generally square 'em or scare 'em. What I does mind is ghosts." "Ah," said I, "you are a believer in ghosts?" "A berliver? Why, I've bin a Swedenborgian these ten years," he rejoined; "but blow me if I ever agin lie out to tackle a yaunted 'ouse. If *you* ain't a berliver, and likes to py me a go of brandy, I'll tell you a story wottle convert you.

You could send it to the society for say Kick-all-research, you could, and they'd put it in their piper." I ordered a glass of brandy, and my acquaintance resumed: "Thenky. My friendly regards. Wull, it was this wye. A year ago larse Jenuerry I was a-doing the Northern Circuit along of a pal of mine nimed Blodgers, Jem Blodgers; and when we come to Carlisle we year'd of a country 'ouse about ten miles suthard, on the Midland, what seemed to us to promise sport. Hoville Towers it was called; and the femmily was awye, spending the winter on the Rivvy Error. The only pussons as slep on the premises was a footman and two mides, and the wing they ockipied was fur enough from the yall door for us to crack it without disturbing 'em. What mide the job pertickiler attractive, I understood as 'ow in the libery there was a perfect copy of the first folio edition of Gelsenius's '*Principia Astrologiæ*,' bound in tree-calf, and stamped with the arms of Margaret de Valois, which would fetch a yundred guineas in the book-market any dye of the year, and no questions arst.

* * * *

"Wull, so Jem and me, one frosty afternoon, we hoofed down with our kit, a-passing of ourselves orf for travelling plumbers in the villages we had to go by, and reached the Towers just as the level rays of the setting sun were turning its ancient sandstone battlements to porphyry and gold. We took a look round while the light lasted, and then laid low, in a sheltered corner of the park, indulging in desultory conversation, till the time come to proceed to business. I'm not denying it was a bit chilly and tiresome waiting there through the long watches of the winter night, but every trade 'as its 'ardships; and what between whisky (of which we'd brought a bottle) and 'ope (of which our 'earts were full), we menneged to keep our bludge a-circuliting. Wull, when I seen by my ticker that it was past midnight, we

The burglar meets
a ghost.

crep up to the principal entrance, and, thanks to our trusty jemmies, bust it open as easy as if it was mide of cardboard, instead of genuine antique oak, what Miple might have bin proud of. After which we found ourselves a-standing in a large stone-pived 'all, 'ung round with antlers and swords and rusty suits of harmour, very grand and baronial. But, what immejiately arrested my attention, and brought every drop of blood in my body to a sudden standstill, as I flashed my bull's-eye about the plice, was a big notice stuck up on the wall above the chimney, bearing the words, painted in black letters on white canvas,

BEWARE OF THE GHOST !

* * * *

“Wull, sir, I ain't a timid man. I ajn't afeard And two detectives of masters nor mistresses, nor dogs, nor keepers, meet the burglar. nor men-servants, nor mide-servants ; but I frankly confess I don't fancy 'aving nothing to do with the denizens of the unseen world—that mysterious universe of Presences by which we dimly feel ourselves to be surrounded. So when I read that there notice, I was for chucking the job, and gitting off the property as fast as possible ; but Blodgers, who hadn't got a trice of the spiritual in his whole composition, Blodgers 'e wouldn't 'ear of it. I argued, I begged, I threatened, but it was no use. ‘Stow your jaw,’ says Blodgers. ‘Shut up and be a bud agin,’ says 'e. And at larse, much against my better judgment, I guv in, though I warned Jem Blodgers at the time that he'd repent his obstinacy before 'e was an hour older ; and as you'll see presently, 'e did, with a vengeance, and in a wye so gruesome that my flesh creeps even now to remember it. When I went into that 'ouse, sir, I had a yead of 'air as black as a raven's wing, and a nose like an eagle's beak ; and now you sees me with a pug nose and 'air of the colour of hashes. Wull, I'm an

authenticated kise of a man whose 'air turned gry and whose nose turned hup in a single night ; and that night the one what me and Jem lied out to burgle Hoville Towers. For no sooner had we left the yall, and entered the passage as led to the libery . . ." At this thrilling moment in my friend's tale the screen-door of the bar swung open and admitted two respectably dressed strangers. Blodgers's partner, with a hastily muttered apology, instantly rose and slipped out ; I have not met him since. A glance at the respectably dressed strangers showed me that they wore regulation boots.

* * * *

I was told he had married, and after that had heard no more about him. My impression was Sherard's story. that he was to be envied, for his wife was said to be beautiful and full of grace, he, himself, was young and handsome, and both were in a good position. He had gone abroad on the day of his marriage, and I had not seen him since. Yet I recognised him at once when the other day I met him on Westminster Bridge, gazing mournfully on the murky waters of the Thames, and I was sorry to see how greatly he had changed. His face was haggard and pale, there was no elegance in his dress, and over all his disordered person was spread an air of unhappiness which distressed me as much as it filled me with surprise. For it was apparent that it was not financial troubles which had caused this change in his once brilliant appearance. His clothes, if dusty and untidy, were of irreproachable tailorship and finest cloth ; his crumpled linen was the best that Irish looms produced ; whilst a ring of great value which he wore contrasted painfully with his soiled hands and neglected fingernails. When I had called on him by name he looked up from the water, and with lustreless eyes gazed into my face.

* * * *

Why?

"Oh, it's you!" he said, after a pause. Then he added, "As we have met, let us go and have some dinner. I would like to tell you all about it." With these words he hailed a cab and drove me off to a fashionable and expensive restaurant in Regent Street. He was very reserved on the way, and I could obtain from him no other answer to the many questions with which I plied him than an oft-repeated: "Wait a bit, I will tell you all about it." On arriving at our destination he handed the driver a sovereign, and, bespeaking a private room in the establishment, ordered a dinner, which, in its bill of fare, as in the wine which was to accompany the dishes, showed that he had indeed not forgotten the customs of refined life. During dinner he was silent. It was not until after the appearance of the Marnier curaoa, of which he drank an inordinate quantity, that he began to speak. "I loved her deeply," he said, without preface or prologue, "and when I carried her off I considered myself the happiest man on God's earth. Perhaps I ought not to have kissed her on the neck in the railway carriage. It shocked her, no doubt, for she started from me with an angry little cry. Yet the pale pink under the fair hair that curled in tiny ringlets over the nape of her neck was so inviting. No doubt it was a mistake also on my part to stay in Calais, intending to pass the night there. Had we gone on to Paris, as I had originally intended to do, all that would not have happened. But the crossing had tired her; and then, of course, I did not know that we should meet that captain of dragoons. It was at the Csino that we met him, whilst the music was playing. He had a fine uniform and a most luxuriant moustache. No doubt the two had met before. It was, of course, imprudent of me, also, to go off, at her request, back to our hotel to fetch her sunshade which she had forgotten. A young bride should not be left alone. But I loved her so, and so trusted her that——" Here he interrupted himself and paused. Then suddenly pushing away the bottle of curaoa he said,

"This stuff is too sweet. I want something stronger. Would you mind rising to touch the bell in the corner over there. I will then tell you the rest of my story." I rose and crossed the room. I touched the button, and, as if in response to the pressure of my finger, a loud report rang through the room. I turned, and saw my friend lying across the table, with a little stream of blood trickling over his disordered hair. The rest was silence.

* * * *

When you come to think of it, there is a lot of romance centred in and about a pack of fox-hounds. Tracy's account of In the first place, whilst actively connected with them a fast run. you may break your neck, and such an incident completely eclipses all else in your life by way of interest. Lastly—to hurry past all the possibilities of the matter—the amount of romancing done at dinner each night during the season gives long odds to every other form of sport, even fishing, though our American friends have invented a new phrase as a sort of conscience buffer for the angler. They always say that a man "claims" to have caught a fish of a named weight. But I once knew a man who got a genuine bit of romance out of missing a run with the York and Ainsty. His wife was a wise woman, but impressionable, and as they had only been married six months, she felt sure that he had never loved anybody else—not even a certain Mrs. Ethel Ffyfe, who was a very gay widow on the verge of thirty, and of society. So pretty Mrs. Hutton believed her husband when he said one morning at breakfast that he was not going to hunt that day, but had some business which might keep him late for luncheon. He kissed her very tenderly as he left the room, so it was with smiling innocence that she opened a telegram which arrived ten minutes later, addressed, "Hutton, the Cedars, York." These were its contents: "Try and come earlier. I am so impatient to see you. Staying Station Hotel, Ethel." It was a woman's message, in

its very phraseology, and it spoke to one. Mrs. Hutton did not faint or scream. She told James, the footman, to help her maid to pack her boxes, as she was going to town in an hour. Then she remembered that there was a telephone in the house on account of the distance of the livery stables. She rang up the Station Hotel, and said, "Is Mrs. Ffyfe at home?" and the hall porter said "Yes." James heard the question, and became very troubled, but he said nothing to Watson, the maid.

* * * *

When the boxes were ready, Mrs. Hutton thought
And its ending. she would convince herself of Dick's duplicity, and wait to see him. He returned, as a matter of fact, before luncheon, and his wife heard him ask James if a telegram had arrived for him. Mrs. Hutton wondered why James said, "I think not, sir," but she gave him a fiver next day because she said she heard it was his birthday. (James was born in June.) Dick murmured "Thank God. She must have been mistaken," but, nevertheless, he looked troubled as he came and sat near his wife. "Sweetheart," he said, "I have something to tell you. A woman, a Mrs. Ffyfe, whom you may have heard of, has been bothering me a good deal, and has actually followed me here. So I thought it best to see her this morning and make it quite clear that I only loved one woman in the world, and that woman my wife. That is why I did not go to the meet to-day, and, as there should always be perfect confidence between us, I am now telling you about it. It was a very unpleasant affair, as she made a scene, but she has left for London and the Riviera, I should imagine." Mrs. Hutton managed to smile as she said, "What a goose she must be to imagine that anybody could come between me and my Dick. I hope you were not very nasty to her—poor thing. I must really order luncheon. Shall be back in a moment." She left the room, found James in the hall, and said, "Tell Watson to unpack as rapidly as

possible. I am not going to-day." Then she came back, dropped on her knees by her husband's chair, flung her arms round him, said, "Oh, Dick, I *do* love you," and began to cry. Dick only knows half the story to this day.

* * * *

Pleasby is a barrister, young but rising. I was in his chambers at the Temple the other day, when Armstrong's friend there came a knock at the outer door, and we heard a feminine voice asking for Mr. Pleasby. "Dash it," he said, in an agitated tone, "this is too bad; I'm confoundedly busy. It's an old lady I lost a case for the other day at a County Court; queer old girl in blue spectacles and a poke bonnet. She's going to appeal in person, thinks I was not good enough, and she told me she would come to me for some tips; that fool Jonathan is letting her in." "Let's slip out to lunch," I said. "Well," answered Pleasby, hopefully, "I might; and you could choke her off and follow me; I'll stand you lunch if you will. All right, Jonathan," he whispered to his clerk, who had looked in. "I know all about it; keep the lady in your room while I get clear. You can manage to get rid of her for ever," he added, turning to me. "All right," I said, poring over Pleasby's papers, with the air of one too busy to be lightly interrupted, and ready for anything from diplomacy to manslaughter, while he slipped out on tip-toe. "The lady, sir," said Jonathan, a moment later, and went out, closing the door.

* * * *

"I hope you don't mind my coming, Mr. Pleasby," she began; "Charlie said you said I might." I didn't like being taken for Pleasby, even by a blind old lady, with a remarkably clear silvery voice, so I went on reading Pleasby's briefs in the dim light without looking up.

The friend's
client.

"Charlie's gone," she continued, hurriedly; "bolted just as you expected him to." It was not quite the story I expected to hear, and I involuntarily glanced at her. I nearly jumped out of the chair. "Rum old girl! poke bonnet!" She was a dream of loveliness temporarily residing in a pinky creation of billowy muslin, chiffon, grenadine, crepon—I never know the names of the stuffs women wear—and a cream-coloured lace parasol lay on Pleasby's table in front of me. "Please don't look at me," she said, "I feel so ashamed of it all." She was crimson and there were tears in her eyes, so I averted mine, and she went on: "I'll tell it all as shortly as I can; he has gone off with Esmeralda; he shot Jack before he left, with a revolver, and I guessed something was wrong for a long time; he seemed more successful lately, only he never would say what he was doing; he used to be out till three in the morning" (I tried to combine sympathy with severity in a nod); "and I used to find such odd things in his pockets; soap, and scent, and button-holes, and stove polish, and baking-powder. Charlie always said I'd better know nothing for the present, but I'm sure he never bought them, and he told me that if he had to leave London I was to go to you and ask for advice—you're sorry about Jack being dead, of course?" "Let's see, which was Charlie and which was Jack?" I said, tentatively. "Charlie? My husband!" she exclaimed, in a surprised tone. "Really, Mr. Pleas—" but the door was opened before I could explain. "Miss Decherville," cried Pleasby, hurrying into the room, "I'm so awfully sorry I only opened your note just now. I'm so annoyed about Jack; I did hope—old as he was—" Then he glanced at me, and I went, for I saw she was going to speak; and from that day to this Pleasby has been barely civil.

* * * *

I have explained I could not help it, she talked so fast, and would have been so embarrassed if I had interrupted her. I had half-a-dozen good excuses for what I did. I don't mind Pleasby being annoyed either, but I do want to know more about Charlie, who eloped with Esmeralda and deserted so charming a young lady, after collecting such curious articles, and shooting Jack (a German waiter and two faithful wives were the only persons whose murder I saw recorded in that week's papers); and I *should* like to know how she learnt to be so philosophical, and how Pleasby came to receive calls from a lady who did not know him by sight, and whom he evidently thought was unmarried; and how, being a barrister with a commercial practice and the pink of professional etiquette, he came to receive a client who, apparently, should have been bestowing her confidences on an Old Bailey solicitor.

* * * *

This story, as a matter of fact, is not mine but my friend Stewart's, and its peculiarity is that although Grew's dilemma. I may see Stewart to-morrow, I shall still not know the end of it. Stewart himself knows as little about it as anyone; he presses me for a solution; and still another reason for telling the story is that in narrating it to an enlarged circle of auditors, my own speculations may be set at rest and Stewart's peace of mind restored. "It happened during the cab strike," Stewart despairingly tells me, "after I had dressed to go to a concert at St. James's Hall. I walked; and am now persuaded that I must have been set down at the wrong staircase. The first intimation I had that something was wrong was at the door of the Great Hall. A young person on either side of the door handed me a printed form. "I don't want two programmes," I began, fumbling in my pockets for small change, when one of the young ladies smilingly protested that there was no charge and that she would give me a pink paper if I liked.

Somewhat bewildered I pushed on and found myself in the large hall. It was almost deserted ; a decanter of water and a glass alone occupied the platform, and I was considering whether I hadn't come to the wrong concert, when I perceived a graceful girl advancing towards me. "How do you do?" says she, holding out a pretty gloved hand. "How do you do?" I responded, wondering who the deuce we both were. "I'm so glad you've come," says the girl. ("I was rather glad myself," Stewart observes at this point. "Her eyes were stars.") "You'd like to see my sister?" she went on. ("I thought it might be an agreeable experience," Stewart comments, "but, on the other hand, her sister might not be so pleased to see me ; so I fenced with the suggestion.") "Well, you'll see her in the Committee Room," she added. "We shall want you this evening, for the enemy will be here in force. I see they've given you some of their leaflets." I glanced at the papers in my hands, and hurriedly took in that they referred to the rights of the woman worker with regard to—bless you, I didn't understand it ! "Yes," I said feebly, "but I can't quite make them out." "They are rather incoherent," she said, sympathetically. "I'll go through them with you."

* * * *

She went through them at gratifying length, though

The papers. I did not profit much from her explanation, being occupied chiefly in hoping that she would go on for ever. When at last she paused, I, being anxious only that she should go on, fell a victim to my evil genius, which prompted me to an irremediable mistake. "Would you mind," I innocently asked, "explaining to me what this meeting is about?" She glanced at me in a startled way, less in anger, I could see, than in the clear belief that my brain was softening ; and, with a rather forced smile, made some excuse and left me. She took my pro-

gramme with her. While I still measured the depth and area of my mistake, another girl came up to me. She wore spectacles—and sensible boots. “This is indeed a pleasure,” she began, “we shall want you this evening.” I remarked with some diminution of my previous cordiality that I was sorry for that. “Oh, not at all,” she returned, “*We* don’t mind the opposition party, especially if their presence brings you to our aid. You’re going on the platform?” said she. “No, I’m not,” I said. “Oh, but you must!” said she. “What for?” said I. “Oh, you must say a few words,” said she. “Not if I know it,” said I. “Oh, but——” she broke off suddenly, “Here they come!” At that moment, to the blare of a couple of bands that ought to have been prosecuted, two processions, one of them of decayed cabmen, entered the Hall and took possession of the seats. I just caught a glimpse of the arch, vivid face of my first girl looking half-smilingly, half-doubtfully towards me—I paused, I turned, I fled.

* * * *

“Well,” I say to Stewart, “it is rather puzzling; but, after all, it was an experience.” Stewart shakes his head sadly. And the solution? “It isn’t that I want to know who I was,” he says, “or what I was expected to do to the opposition party, or why there was an opposition party; it is that I dare never find out who *She* was.” And in the hope that she may perhaps come forward to explain and to forgive Stewart his unwitting deception, I venture to put his case before you.

* * * *

An Esculapian holiday-maker has a strange adventure.

If, Mr. IDLER, you have an artist on board your literary caravel who can draw a skull in the act of talking, let him show his skill without any aid except what he may gather from the gossip of one on this southern shore of the planet. It had been very wet for many hours, but in the evening it cleared up a little. I had mooned through the day with THE IDLER, "Hudibras," "Colonel Jack," and the "Heavenly Twins," when suddenly near bed-time, which I keep religiously, somebody or something said "Walk out." It was so imperative, I was obliged to go ; so, quite mechanically, and very sleepily, I set forth. I felt, like Pope's friend, and my friend, Dr. Arbuthnot, I could do anything but walk, yet I walked until I was tired out of mind and body, the low moan of the sea coaxing me on. At last I came unto a street with a steep hill leading to a church, and as I ascended I saw by a faint moonlight where I was. I climbed the steps, crossed the porch, turned to the right, and, descending to the left, found a door with broken little pillars that had once supported a beautiful archway. The door was that of a crypt in which, long ago, I had spent three days measuring bones and skulls that were there. Sitting down on a kind of low parapet, I recalled that research, calculating the number of years that had fled by, and reading, as if it were before my eyes, the itinerary of Daniel Defoe, descriptive of the same place in the time when Queen Anne rose to the throne. Gradually there came over me a murmuring sound, which might be the sea-wind coursing through the trees as if it were bearing something landward, but by-and-bye it became clear that the noise proceeded from within the crypt, and resolved into an awful jabber, sharp, rattling, rusty. In time, two words and a rattle rolled out of the noise. The words were, "Come in, come in, come in"; and then the rattle, a loud and jabbering laugh. I am not a coward in these things. I never was. When I went first to serve my "rudimans," *à la* Dr. Cophagus,

an older pupil thought to frighten me by putting a skeleton into my bed in our double-bedded room. As I was about to get into bed there was my bony friend fast asleep, with his head resting on his right hand. How pleasant he looks, I said to myself, and, lifting him gently out of bed, I clothed him neatly in my fellow pupil's own night-gown, and hung him on the peg at the back of the door, where my friend usually swung his best surtout coat. Then I carefully got into my friend's bed, put out the candle, and waited results. I had not long to wait. Soon my tricky companion came in, light in hand, on tip-toe. He went to the bed where the skeleton should be and was startled to find nothing there; then, turning to the door, and seeing what was in his own night-dress grinning at him, the superstitious awe he intended for me fell upon himself, so that, but for my prompt aid, he would have fainted on the floor. He recovered to fly from the room, soon from the house, and also soon from a profession he never was fitted to adorn.

* * * *

To return, I was not affrighted now. I moved to the door of the crypt, and, for some reason, found the In a crypt. cave keeper had by a strange accident left the key in the lock; so in I walked, the moon rising and lighting up the place delightfully. A kind of camp-stool gave a ready seat, and as I took advantage of it I gathered in the scene—a crypt of skulls. The skulls were piled up in two pyramids opposite each other, having left their legs, and ribs, and arms in a large heap straight ahead, neatly packed but rather damp towards the floor. They were now so silent they made me again undergo that drowsiness I had felt outside. "They are trying to hypnotise me," I said, once more talking to myself, "but they shan't do

it, not a bit of it." Suddenly they began to jabber again, and when I looked about, although they had not moved a line, all their sockets were on me, the lower ones down, the upper ones up. It was a strange sensation, like a pleasant turn at a rapid rate in a merry-go-round. It was impossible to keep looking at them, and I tried to close my eyes as well as my ears.

The jabber ceased, but was followed by a more curious circumstance. On my right hand there was a table with two skulls on it. One was a very big skull indeed, very dark, very high, with an enormous square jaw. He rested on a little pillar, side face to me.

"Push me a bit forward," he said.

"Why?"

"Because I want freedom of speech. Aren't you anatomist enough to know that you talk with your lower jaw, and how can I speak clearly with mine flat out on a board?"

"Quite right," moving him into a freer position, "but how can you talk without a tongue?"

"Aren't you surgeon enough to know that a man can talk without a tongue?"

"I am."

"Then don't ask any more silly questions. I've a grudge against you."

"Against me? That's appalling!"

"You once came here, you turned me upside down in soft clay, boxed me tight in it, and then, through the big hole in the centre of me, you filled me with water."

"That was to try your cubic capacity; and the quantity of brain you once used to carry."

"I don't care what it was for, I didn't like it."

"Who are you?" I asked, respectfully.

"Who am I? I am what you see me."

"So you are, but who were you?"

"That's different; well, I was sword-bearer to Vortigern."

"Go on, I should like to hear about him."

"A love-story about him?"

"Of all things. I want it for the readers of *THE IDLER*."

"They must wait. I hate Idlers. Impatience will do them good, it will stir them up. Poor beggars!"

People I Have Never Met.

BY SCOTT RANKIN.

GILBERT PARKER.



"Tell with your tongue, for what English have I? But do not write it, *mais non!* Writing wanders from the matter—the eyes, and the tongue, and the time, that is the thing. But in a book!—it will sound all cold and thin. It is for the north, for the camp fire, for the big talk before a man rolls into his blanket and is at peace. No! no writing, monsieur. Speak it everywhere with your tongue."—PRETTY PIERRE.



BY W. L. ALDEN.

WHILE the European nations have been dividing Africa among themselves, the novelists have been calmly parcelling out the earth. Mr. Haggard has taken the whole of Africa—hinterland as well as coast line—for himself, and not satisfied with this, he has recently added Mexico and Central America to his possessions. Mr. Stanley Weyman has seized upon France, and now shows a disposition to annex the Rhine provinces. Mr. Gilbert Parker owns the Dominion of Canada, and is making even its bleak mountains and wintry plains lovable. Mr. Stevenson has made the South Sea islands as completely his own as Treasure Island itself. Two or three nove-

lists lay claim to Australia, and whether it will finally fall to Mr. Boldrewood, or Mr. Hornung, or Mr. Boothby, remains to be seen. As for India, it is one of the possessions of Mr. Kipling, although, like the British drum-beat, his territorial rights stretch clear around the globe. Even the United States, vast as it is, has been divided between two men only : Mr. Bret Harte enjoying a monopoly of all that is picturesque among Americans, and Mr. Howells contenting himself with the still larger field of all that is uninteresting.

France, Germany, and England may have a good deal of trouble among themselves over their conflicting African claims, but no one will disturb Mr. Haggard. His dominion is so well established, that any one who should venture to write an African novel would at once be called Mr. Haggard's imitator. It would not be necessary to go to the extreme length of stealing Mr. Haggard's patented Zulu warrior (with miraculous axe attachment, substantially as set forth in the patentee's drawings and specifications). Any story dealing with African savages, an heroic hunter, and two or three adventurous English travellers, would constitute a flagrant breach of Mr. Haggard's territorial rights. So, too, the man who should write a Canadian story would have hard work to prove that he was not imitating Mr. Parker, and his only possible defence would be to establish to the satisfaction of everybody that he had written a better story than any of Mr. Parker's stories—a task which few men would be rash enough to attempt.

This division of the earth among contemporary novelists has not, as yet, included Greenland, where some new writer can lay the scene of a story, in which the heroine will wear seal-skin trousers, and calm her troubled heart with mighty draughts of train oil. Neither has any novelist seized upon China, where great things may yet be done by a story-teller who really knows something of that modern and multitudinous sphinx, the Chinaman. But with these exceptions there is very little desirable territory which is not pre-empted. This, of course, greatly hampers new novelists who are compelled to write novels dealing only with English men and women at home. England is the

common possession of everybody, and even the American writer who does not wish to imitate either Mr. Harte or Mr. Howells is compelled, like Mr. Henry James, to lay the scene of his stories in London, or in some one of the many little English colonies to be found in Continental cities. The English novelist who wishes to write a story, characterised by some little novelty, is reduced to inventing Dodos or other fabulous creatures, an attempt which fails more frequently than it succeeds.

This state of things is so plain to every writer that I wonder that no one has rushed in to occupy the Greenland or the Chinese field. A Greenland story would at once attract attention because of its novelty, and we, who have never been to Greenland, could warmly recognise the truth of its local colour, and the profound knowledge of Esquimaux character shown by the writer. An Advanced Esquimaux maiden with a wild desire to wear petticoats instead of trousers, and to drink tea instead of train oil, could hardly fail to charm the reader. I am afraid, however, that the Advanced Esquimaux maid would not survive beyond the first four or five chapters, for I understand that whenever an Esquimaux woman exhibits symptoms of Advanced Thinking she is immediately set adrift on an ice-floe. The Esquimaux are a remarkably intelligent race of savages, as is shown by the fact that they invented the kayak, centuries before the late "Rob Roy" McGregor re-invented it in England.

* * * *

Mr. Gilbert Parker has written a number of thoroughly excellent short stories, and his recent novel, "The Translation of a Savage," stood out conspicuously from the ruck of ordinary novels. But in his newest book, "The Trail of the Sword" (Methuen & Co.), he has unmistakably "arrived." It is a Canadian story, written with the firm hand of a man who knows not only every inch of the ground which he treads, but who also

knows how to wield his pen. Mr. Parker is one of the few novelists who has a style which is thoroughly his own, and which is also thoroughly good. Any man can, with patience in wrongdoing, form a bad style, and patent it, but to acquire a good style, without at the same time imitating some one of the great masters of style, is an achievement of which a man has a right to be proud. The "Trail of the Sword" is not a long book, but that is due to the fact that it is severely condensed. Mr. Parker has put into a single volume what a less conscientious writer would have expanded to three. No one who knows Canada can fail to recognise the pre-Raphaelite fidelity with which Mr. Parker's vivid and picturesque scenes are painted. I wonder why Mr. Parker has never yet written of Chambly Castle. Few men know that picturesque ruin, for it lies outside of the track of travel, but it is haunted with the ghosts of early Canadian heroes, and I have long been waiting for the man who shall weave a romance around it. Clearly Mr. Parker is the man to do this, and some day I shall take up a new book by him, and shall find as a frontispiece a picture of the crumbling walls and bastions of Chambly Castle. How the rapids of the Richelieu murmur of the dead centuries beside the walls of the only ruined castle that America possesses! Has Mr. Parker ever heard them? If so, how has he resisted putting their whisperings into words?

* * * *

The evils of thinking that one thinks are forcibly illustrated in "This Man's Dominion" (Methuen & Co.). All the people in the story are guilty of the error of thinking that they think. The hero is an unnamed variety of dissenting preacher, who seems to think that all sorts of creeds are wrong, and who is clearly in the mental condition of one who "dunno where he are." Of the two heroines, one is an extreme Ritualist, who, nevertheless, marries the dissenting preacher, and the other is

a worldly young person who thinks that she would have been glad to marry the same all-conquering preacher if she had been able to win him. There is a third young woman, who thinks that she is some sort of an atheist, and wishes to go and be a rollicking "Comrade," whereas what she really needs is the restraining influence of bromide of potassium. It is a notorious fact that the woman who thinks she thinks is as good as lost, and that the preacher who indulges in the same delusion seldom fails to come to grief. It need not, therefore, surprise the reader to find that "This Man's Dominion" is by no means a cheerful book. Nevertheless, it shows decided power, and, however impatient we may be with the mental processes of the author's men and women, we become interested in them, and in their respective fates. This is the supreme merit of every good novel, and it gives "This Man's Dominion" a right to respectful consideration. Moreover, the author has stopped short of inventing a new religion, and this self-restraint places her far above the ordinary writer of theological novels.

* * * *

M. Zola is probably the most accurate man living, so far as any statement of facts that he may make is concerned. His fellow-countrymen, indignant at the merciless description of French military incompetency in the "Debauch," attempted to prove that Zola had made mistakes in his story of the Sedan Campaign, but their nearest approach to success was in casting doubt on the statement that Napoleon III. painted his face. More recently an effort had been made to convict Zola of inaccuracy in his account of Bernadotte and Lourdes, but so far the attempt has been a complete failure. When we remember the mistakes that the best military historians, and the most careful writers on matters of religious controversy, seldom fail to make, the accuracy of Zola seems marvellous. This suggests

the question whether the school, which he had founded, ought not to turn its attention to writing blue books and government reports. Suppose, for example, that Zola could be induced to write a novel on the condition of the British navy, or on the opium question. In that case we should have a report that would be far more accurate than any report that a Parliamentary Commission could produce, and that would, moreover, have the merit of being eminently readable—a merit that the average Government report signally lacks. When the Opium Commission makes its report, not more than one in a hundred of the anti-opium faddists will read it, and their opinion as to the matter will remain precisely as it is at present. Whereas, were Zola to present all the facts of the case in the guise of a novel, it would not only be universally read, but the reader would be compelled to believe in its accuracy. In the whole range of anti-alcoholic diatribes there is nothing that can be compared for one moment with the “Assommoir” as an argument against drunkenness. The inhumanity and folly of war were never so powerfully exposed as in the “Debacle,” and if a man wishes to learn the truth as to the condition of the miners, and the inward history of a mining strike, “Germinal” will give him more information than a shelf full of blue books. I am convinced that Zola’s true sphere is the writing of Government reports. The French Government ought to employ him at an enormous salary to prepare one such report every year. In that way it would become possible for Frenchmen to learn something about themselves. The official romances which are now put forth by the Government in the shape of reports upon the Panama matter, or the misappropriation of public funds at Toulon and elsewhere, are dull and untrustworthy in comparison with the yellow-covered reports that Zola would write, and that every man and woman in France would read.

* * * *

What is it that constitutes a minor poet, and in what does the essential minority of his poems consist? Are they "minor poems" because they are less in quantity, or because they are feebler in quality, than the poems of real poets? Here is a volume of minor poems by Mr. Richard Norman Morris Jones, entitled "*Songs of Several Things*" (Peters & Sons). There are musical lines in the volume, and there are occasionally distinctly poetical thoughts, but there is nothing that rises to the standard of full-grown, robust verse. The minor poet either echoes a great poet, in which case the original is greatly to be preferred to the imitation, or he writes his own feeble rhymes, for which it is impossible to suppose that there is any real demand. Take, for example, the four lines entitled "*A Tragedy*," which may be found on the tenth page of the volume in question. They are as follows :—

"The lovers lean across the gate,
And go not yet, she maketh moan;
The fierce far-bouncing father comes,
She swingeth on the gate alone."

This certainly gives us a vivid picture. We can see the lover flying down the street; the triumphant father gazing proudly at his victorious boot, and the unhappy maiden left to swing in gloomy solitude. We cannot deny that the verse has true poetic merit, but the question arises would it ever have been written had not Spenser written "*The Faërie Queen*." Obviously it is a mere echo of Spenser, and an echo, unless it has the originality of an Irish echo, is an utterly useless thing.

But the small, invertebrate rhymes of the minor poet, are even less defensible than are his echoes. This is the way in which the minor poet writes when giving us his own powerful thoughts. Mr. Jones remarks :—

"My pussy-cat with spotless fur,
And ever zenith-pointing tail,
Thou biddest me look up and purr,
When earthly hopes and pleasures fail."

Now this is quite unobjectionable, so far as its ethical

tendency is concerned. The idea is simply expressed, and its teaching is commendable. But what is there in the verse that is new? The same idea has been expressed in verse a thousand times, and it makes no difference whether it is a kitten's tail, or a church spire, that invites the poet to look upward. Why then should Mr. Jones insist upon being a minor parrot, as well as a minor poet? The world ought to have no room for minor poets, or minor painters, or minor violin players. Unless a man can excel in whatever art he undertakes he should let it alone. Especially is this true of poetry. There is already more good poetry in the world than we need. A careful calculation, made by an eminent statistician, shows that if the really good English poetry now in print were to be divided by the number of persons in Great Britain who can read, there would be nearly seven yards of poetry for each person. This is as much as any man can profitably use, and there is no possible excuse for the efforts of the minor poets to add yard upon yard of indifferent verse to the stock in hand.

* * * *

The newspaper seems to have lost all sense of proportion, and it habitually gives to news of no possible importance as much space as it gives to matters of universal interest. Latterly the newspapers have been giving us long accounts of the fighting which is taking place in Samoa between tribes of naked savages in quarrels, of the origin and meaning of which no man cares a rush. Meanwhile, the same newspapers have not given us the slightest news as to the health of Mr. Stevenson. Now, the only news from Samoa which would be of the slightest consequence, would be news relating to Stevenson, but the newspapers will give us half-a-column of despatches concerning this or that native king, with never a mention of Stevenson's name.

Samoa must be a delightful place of residence to any one

who is not compelled to live there ; but man is so constituted that he inevitably hates what he is obliged to do. Mr. Stevenson, as is well known, is compelled to live in Samoa in order to live at all, and hence he must find the place terribly wearisome. Some six months ago I saw, as everyone else saw, a letter from Stevenson, in which he spoke of his exile in a way that was to me intensely pathetic. How he must long for the morning papers, and for the new books that London and Paris constantly send out ! Suppose that every reader of *THE IDLER* should send Stevenson a newspaper, or a new book. The next steamer to Samoa would be fairly loaded down with mailbags addressed to Mr. Stevenson, and their arrival could not fail to lighten, for a time at least, the burden of exile. I don't imagine that two hundred thousand newspapers and books would flood Samoa with new sunlight, but then sunlight is not what Stevenson wants. A good wet Scotch mist, or a reasonably thick London fog would be far more welcome to the exile, and among the two hundred thousand books and newspapers, there would be scores of progressive journals, and theological and political novels, that would furnish fog and mist enough to satisfy any one.

* * * *

Mr. Stanley Weyman's new story, "*My Lady Rotha*" (A. D. Innes & Co.), fully justifies his invasion of German territory, and he will henceforth have a much better claim to the Rhine provinces than has France. Like his previous stories, "*My Lady Rotha*" is full of adventure. How Mr. Weyman can devise so many hand-to-hand fights, and so many wonderful escapes from imminent danger, and still never repeat himself, is a marvel. In every chapter he gives us some incident that stirs the blood, and his stories are so deftly constructed that the reader never reaches a point where he can lay them down unfinished. There is, of course, plenty of blood in Mr. Weyman's

new book, but it is served in mediæval silver goblets and not in barbaric hogsheads, like the African blood that flows so freely in Mr. Haggard's stories. We can gratify our natural taste for blood while reading Mr. Weyman's romances, and at the same time feel that we are not smearing our hands and faces.

Nobody can be expected to take any great interest in the Thirty Years' War. Even the actors in that inexcusably long struggle must have forgotten its origin, and it is notorious that the leaders frequently forgot on which side they were fighting. Mr. Weyman's story deals with the Thirty Years' War, but he never once mentions the causes that led to it. He concerns himself only with the fortunes of the Lady Rotha and Martin Schwartz, and has not the slightest desire to teach history to his readers. Of course it is impossible to read "My Lady Rotha" without incidentally learning bits of German history, but they are so skilfully mixed with romance that they will do the reader no real harm. "My Lady Rotha" will certainly be found to be as interesting as "A Gentleman of France," and higher praise no historical novel need receive.

* * * *

Some one with a passion for philology and swearing recently desired to know the origin of the expletive, "Great Scott!" It seems that this mild substitute for swearing has become very popular among Englishmen, now that Dodo and her kind have taken possession of the more sulphurous expressions, and thereby led men to feel that their use is a sign of effeminacy. "Great Scott!" is American in its origin. More than a generation ago the American General Scott captured the city of Mexico, and his admiring countrymen at once decided that he was the greatest general the world had ever seen. In their adoration of him they even went to the length of swearing by him, and to exclaim "Great Scott!" became an evidence of

patriotism. The name and fame of General Scott have not survived the Civil War, where real fighting was done by real generals, but "Great Scott!" was so satisfactory, and at the same time so innocent a substitute for profanity, that it has gained steadily in popularity, and threatens to become the favourite expletive of the English-speaking races. It is constantly used in England by those who have not an idea that they are virtually acquiescing in the apotheosis of an American soldier. Perhaps if this were generally known, "Great Scott!" would be superseded by "Great Bobs!" The latter would have a rather more rotund and mouth-filling sound, and would, therefore, more fully satisfy the deep wants of our spiritual nature.

* * * *

The worst mistake a novelist can make is to write an exceptionally clever book, unless, indeed, he is certain he can write another equally clever. Mr. George Cable furnishes a striking illustration of this fact. Years ago he wrote "*The Grandissimes*," a book so fresh, so powerful, and so brilliant, that he was at once recognised as a writer of exceptional genius. Never had a novelist written a story of greater promise; but the promise has never been fulfilled. Mr. Cable's subsequent books were not without passages of obvious merit, but they were painfully and undeniably tedious. That the man who wrote "*The Grandissimes*" was capable of following it with a book as heavy and dull as "*Dr. Sevier*," is a terrible warning to a new novelist not to be too clever. It is better to persevere in writing moderately good books, than it is to write one great book, and ever afterwards to fail to meet the just expectations of the public.

Mr. Cable's new story—"John March, Southerner" (Sampson Low & Co.)—is better than anything he has done since

"The Grandissimes," and the portrait which he gives of the mulatto politician is alone sufficient to make the book noteworthy, but "John March" will inevitably be compared with the author's first book, much to the disadvantage of the former. If Mr. Cable could only begin with this book and write backward to "The Grandissimes," his reputation would be far higher than it is at present.



NOTE.—The photograph of Mr. Walter Besant, which appeared in our September number, is by Messrs. Miell & Ridley, photographers, of Bournemouth.



"FASHIONED AN IMAGE OF SNOW."

The Story of Ung.

(A FABLE FOR THE CRITICISED.)

BY RUDYARD KIPLING.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY A. S. BOYD.

ONCE on the glittering ice-field, thousands of years ago,
Ung, a maker of pictures, fashioned an image of snow.
Fashioned the form of a tribesman. Gaily he whistled and sung,
Working the snow with his fingers. *Read ye the story of Ung.*

Pleased was his tribe with the image ; came in their hundreds to
scan—

Handled it, smelt it, and grunted : “ Verily, this is a man !
Thus do we carry our lances ; thus is a war-belt slung.
Lo ! it is even as we are. Glory and honour to Ung.”

Later, he pictured an Aurochs—later, he pictured a bear—
Pictured the Sabre-tooth tiger dragging a man to his lair—
Pictured the mountainous Mammoth, hairy, abhorrent, alone—
Out of the love that he bore them, scribing them clearly on bone.

Swift came the tribe to behold them, pushing and peering and
still—

Men of the berg-battered beaches, men of the boulder-hatched
hill—

Hunters and fishers and trappers, presently whispering low :
“ Yea, they are like—and it may be ; but how does the Picture-
man know ?

“ Ung—has he slept with the Aurochs—watched where the
Mastodons roam ?

Spoke on the ice with the Bowhead—followed the Sabre-tooth
home ?



"SCRIBING THEM CLEARLY ON BONE."

Bah! these are toys of his fancy ! If he have cheated us so,
How is there truth in his image—the man that he fashioned of
snow ? ”

Wrath was that maker of pictures. Hotly he answered the call :
“ Hunters and fishers and trappers, children and fools are ye all !
Look at the beasts when ye hunt them ! ” Swift from the tumult
he broke,
Ran to the cave of his father, and told him the shame that they
spoke.

* * * * *

And the father of Ung gave answer, that was old and wise in
the craft,
Maker of pictures aforetime, he leaned on his lance and laughed.
“ If they could see as thou seest, they would do what thou hast
done,
And each man would make him a picture, and—what would
become of my son ?

“ There would be no pelts of the reindeer, flung down at thy feet
for a gift,
Nor dole of the oily timber that comes on the Baltic drift,
No store of well-drilled needles, nor ouches of amber pale,
No new-cut tongues of the bison, nor meat of the stranded
whale.

“ *Thou* hast not toiled at the fishing when the sodden trammels
freeze,
Nor rowed the war-boats outward, through the rush of the rock-
staked seas ;
Yet they bring thee fish and plunder—full meal and an easy
bed—
And all for the sake of thy pictures.” And Ung held down his
head.



"'SON THAT CAN SEE SO CLEARLY.'"

"*Thou* hast not stood to the Aurochs when the red snow reeks
of the fight—

Men have no time at the houghing to count his curls aright.
And the heart of the hairy mammoth thou sayest they do not
see,
Yet they save it whole from the beaches, and boil the best for
thee.

"And now do they press to thy pictures, with opened mouth
and eye,
And a little gift in the doorway, and the praise no gift can buy :
But, sure, they have doubted the pictures, and that is a burning
stain—
Son that can see so clearly, return them their gifts again."

And Ung looked down at his deerskins—their broad gut-tasselled
bands—

And Ung drew downward his mittens, and looked at his naked
hands ;

And he gloved himself and departed, and he heard his father
behind :

"Son that can see so clearly, rejoice that thy tribe is blind?"

Straight on the glittering ice-field, by the caves of the lost
Dordogne,

Ung, a maker of pictures, went to his scribing on bone,
Even to mammoth editions. Gaily he whistled and sung,
Blessing the tribe for their blindness. *Heed ye the story of Ung.*



"'CAN'T YOU SING?"

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The Christmas Picture.

BY ROBERT BARR.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY STANLEY L. WOOD.

ALTHOUGH it was a lovely day, with the sky bluer than an English sky has any right to be, Jimmy Sprowle came away from his interview with the grocer very much depressed in spirits. The interview had been extremely unsatisfactory from Jimmy's standpoint. The grocer, good man, was not in the business for his health, and wanted his money. He refused point blank to furnish Jimmy with any more of the supplies of life. This being the case, young Sprowle did not see how he was going to manage. He had been living on that grocer for the past two weeks, and the tradesman, beginning to get anxious, had made inquiries. Notwithstanding the fact that Jimmy lived in the most expensive studio buildings in London, the grocer found reason to doubt that he was as prosperous as he seemed, and so refused further credit.

Jimmy was very much disappointed, because his friend had told him that the simple address of the Stilvio Studios was good for any amount of credit with any tradesman in London. The grocer was a shrewd man; and he discovered, first, that Jimmy was not a tenant of the Stilvio Studios, but that a friend had lent him his two rooms in that palatial building while the friend, an artist of some note, had gone off to Switzerland for the summer. The grocer further ascertained that Jimmy was a man of no repute whatever; and, what was more to the point, had no effects and no customers.

"If you could show me an order from some one," said the grocer, "even a £10 order for a picture, why then I might let you have a little credit. But as it is, I see no chance of being repaid, and I can't support the unemployed of London, you know."

The attitude assumed by the grocer was so reasonable that Jimmy could find no words with which to combat it; so he left the place with bowed head, and spirits away down below zero. Life was not so easy a problem as he had thought. He imagined that when Brentwood had so generously given up his studio, free of rent and taxes, to him, that he would have no difficulty

in earning at least his daily sandwich. But two weeks of semi-starvation had shown him his mistake. He was sure of a place to sleep and work in for the next few months, and that was something ; besides, summer was coming on, so he needed to buy no coals.

Rich customers sometimes rapped at his door, but they were always in quest of some other man ; and if no one ever came to even look at his pictures, what was a young fellow to do ? All he wanted was a chance. He knew that he drew better pictures than many who were daily refusing work ; but then every young artist knows that, and it doesn't count. Thus he meditated bitterly on things as they were until he came to the door of the huge Stilvio Studio Buildings, and there his reverie was interrupted by a small boy in buttons, who asked him if he knew where Mr. Sprowle lived.

" Mr. Sprowle ? " asked Jimmy, in surprise. " I'm Mr. Sprowle."

" Mr. J. Sprowle ? " said the boy, cautiously.

" Yes, that is my name."

" Then here is a letter for you," said Buttons.

As Jimmy took the letter he noticed on the envelope the name, *The Illustrated Sphinx*, and his heart beat high. Here, perhaps, might be an offer of work. Even before he took the letter from the envelope he looked upon himself as a made man.

The letter began familiarly, " My dear Sprowle," and went on to say that he, the editor, wanted a Christmas picture in Sprowle's usual style.

" My usual style," said Jimmy, meditatively ; " they must have seen some of my pictures at the Earl's Court Exhibition." The sum to be paid was £300. Again Jimmy's eyes opened, and he whistled a long whistle. The editor would give till the last day possible for the finishing of the picture, as he knew that Sprowle liked plenty of time. That is true, thought Jimmy, but how in the world did he know it ! The note ended by naming the day on which the picture must be in their hands for putting on the stone. There would be fifteen printings, the editor said, and he then signed himself, " Yours very truly, R. Spounding." There was a postscript to the letter, to the effect that if the terms were acceptable, and the time sufficient, Mr. Sprowle was to intimate the same to the bearer.

Jimmy looked at the boy standing there so respectfully and

said : "You may tell Mr. Spounding that it is all right. I shall have the picture ready for him by the date he names."

When the boy had departed Jimmy, highly elated, with the letter in his hand, made his way as quickly as he could to the grocer.

"There," he said, to that good man, who was astonished at seeing him return so soon. "Read this note that I have just



"WHEN DID YOU GET THIS?"

received from the editor of *The Sphinx*. As a usual thing," continued Jimmy, loftily, "I don't say much about my commissions or my customers, but as you seem to be afraid that the money I owe you will not be paid, kindly cast your eyes over that."

The grocer adjusted his spectacles and read the letter twice. Then he turned it over and over several times doubtfully, looking every now and again across his glasses at Jimmy.

"When did you get this?" he finally asked.

"Just a moment ago. *The Sphinx* office-boy brought it, and was waiting for me when I got back."

"It is a very large sum for one picture," demurred the grocer.

Jimmy waved his hand with an air of the utmost importance and superiority, as he answered, "Oh, it's nothing to what some of us get; I intend to raise my prices next year."

"Well," said the grocer, who had been some time in trade and had been bilked before, "you will, of course, have this stamped? It is not a contract otherwise."

"Oh, I don't know about that," replied Jimmy; "I never have these things stamped." But he did not add that he had not the sixpence. "It is always wise to be on the safe side," shrewdly rejoined the grocer. "I am going to the Strand this afternoon, and if you will leave this with me, I'll have it stamped, and," he carefully added, "I'll charge the sixpence in the bill. A busy man like you won't want to bother with these things. When it is all stamped and regular, I will give you what credit you want up to the time that you are paid for the picture."

"That is perfectly satisfactory to me," replied Jimmy. The grocer, folding the document and putting it in his pocket, asked what he might have the pleasure of sending to his rooms in the Stilverio Studio.

The grocer was a wise man in his generation, and, before banging his sixpence at Somerset House, he called at the imposing offices of *The Illustrated Sphinx*, and asked to see some one in authority. After waiting for some time in a room where copies of that celebrated paper lay on a table for the entertainment of visitors, a man came in and asked what the grocer was so good as to want. The grocer took the paper from his pocket and handed it to this person, saying:

"Is that all right?"

"What do you mean by all right?"

"I mean is it true that you are going to pay Mr. Sprowle £300 for one picture?"

"Well," said the man, hesitatingly, "I can hardly see how that concerns you. How did you come by this paper?"

"Mr. Sprowle is a customer of mine, and a *new* customer," explained the grocer, "and I don't feel altogether sure of payment. He showed me this paper in proof that people did buy his pictures."

The man in authority laughed, and said : "Oh, I think you will find Mr. Sprowle good for any credit that he cares to ask of you. You supply him at the Stilvio Studios, do you not?"

"Yes," said the grocer.

"Oh, well, you may make your mind easy about Mr. Sprowle. That paper is all right. He will get the £300 as soon as he delivers his picture, or before, if he wants it."

"Thank you," said the grocer, and he departed to expend his sixpence on the stamping of the document.

Although the man in authority wondered that so celebrated a man as Sprowle would give such a paper to a grocer, he, however, knew much about artists, and was well aware that there was no accounting for what they might do.

The grocer handed back the paper to Jimmy with greater deference than he had, up-to-date, shown that young man. Jimmy noticed that the paper had a beautiful red stamp embossed on the corner of it.

"That," said the grocer, "makes it a contract. You could not sue for your money otherwise."

"Oh, that is all right," said Jimmy, nonchalantly, as if commissions like this dropped in on him every day. "I have no fear about the money."

He went back to his studio and began to plan his picture, throwing his heart and soul into the work. He knew the kind of thing *The Sphinx* wanted : a pretty child with a dog or a cat. This represented the standard of art at the end of the century, attained by the great British public. It must be done in flaming colours, and would, as the editor had written, be printed on fifteen lithographic stones.

About the time the picture was finished, Sprowle received word from the owner of the studio that he was unexpectedly coming home. "Don't be afraid that you will be evicted," Brentwood wrote ; "I am going to be in London for a day or two only, as business calls me to America, where I intend to remain for the next two or three months. Nevertheless, I shall drop in on you and see how you are getting on."

In due time, Brentwood came and looked at the big picture on the easel. "Ah, Jimmy," he said, "you've struck the right gait at last. That's the thing that pays. French art doesn't go down in this country ; you have adopted the true British style, too. Where are you going to exhibit?"

"Oh," said Jimmy, in an off-hand manner, "it is a commission, and is not intended for exhibition."

"A commission! From whom?"

"From *The Illustrated Sphinx*," quietly responded Jimmy.

Brentwood whistled a note of incredulity before he said: "By George! you *are* getting on.

How came you to receive a commission from *The Sphinx*? They are generally satisfied with nothing less than a Royal Academician. How much do they give you for it?"



"LOOKED AT THE BIG PICTURE."

"Only a little matter of £300," said Jimmy.

"Look here, young man," replied Brentwood, earnestly, "I dislike very much to call any one a liar."

"Don't hesitate on my account," said Sprowle. "Here is the contract, if you care to read it."

Brentwood took the paper and read it carefully. Then he threw back his head and laughed.

"You don't mean to say," he cried, "that you imagined for a moment that this was meant for you? How did you get possession of it?"

"Get possession of it?" cried Jimmy. "How should I get possession of it? It was sent to me by the editor, and I answered it."

"Yes, and I see that you have had it stamped at Somerset House, which was very wise of you, Jimmy. I didn't think you had so much business mingled with your art."

"It was the grocer who did that. I didn't know anything about it. He said stamping made it a contract."

"So it does; but you don't mean to say you did not know that this was intended for Sir John Sprowle, the Academician, who has the whole upper flat of this building for his studio?"

"I never heard of him," said Jimmy, blankly.

"And yet you pretend to practise art in Great Britain."

"Well, you know," protested Sprowle, "that I am better acquainted with French art than with English artists. I never heard of Sir John Sprowle, and why was the letter not addressed to Sir John Sprowle? It was addressed to me, 'J. Sprowle, Esq.'"

"Have you got the envelope?"

"No, I tore it up."

"Ah, I see, the letter was written in April; that accounts for it. Sir John was knighted on the twenty-fourth of May, in the distribution of birthday honours, you know. Well, you have got old Sponding in a nice box. I should like to see his face when he learns the truth. He thinks that Sir John Sprowle is doing a picture for him, when down comes an unknown Jimmy Sprowle on him with a dull thud, saying, 'Here is the kid and the dog, and I want my little £300, if you please.' I say, Jimmy, there will be a row in *The Sphinx* office when Sponding realises the situation. It's a blessing the grocer had that embossing done on the paper."

Young Sprowle sat down with a look of despair, and dropped his brush on to the floor.

"Are you really in earnest?" he said at last; "and not

chaffing me? Do you think the letter was intended for another man?"

"Why, of course it was. You haven't any doubt about it, have you?" asked Brentwood.

"This is awful," said Jimmy, mopping his brow. "What can I do with the grocer? I owe him pounds and pounds."

"Do!" exclaimed Brentwood; "why bluff them out of the three hundred. That's the only thing to do. You've been waiting for your chance, and here it has come. Make them take the picture."

"Oh, but that wouldn't be honest," said Jimmy, in agony.

"My dear fellow, the picture will be a boon to Spounding when he understands his position."

"Oh," groaned Jimmy again.



"DROPPED HIS BRUSH ON THE FLOOR!"

"You see, my dear boy, he can't help himself, the time is too short; besides, the picture is quite as good as anything the other Sprowle would have done for him. In fact, after he recovers from his anger, Spounding will be very glad to have the picture ready for him—nice new paint and all. I have a score or two to settle with the editor of *The Sphinx* myself, arising out of some dealings we had when I was young and unsophisticated. This

affair has gone beyond you, Jimmy, my boy. It requires a diplomat to deal with it now. You must let me take the picture to Spounding, so that I may break the news gently to him. I will take all responsibility. I would give £300 to see Spounding when he learns the truth. *The Sphinx* has plenty of money, and you may as well have some of it. You must stand by your grocer, too, Jimmy, for he has stood by you nobly."

Sprowle still sat dejectedly; his bowed head in his hands; all his jauntiness departed. He was crushed under the blow, and Brentwood felt very sorry for him.

"Come, old man, cheer up," he said; "finish your picture and scrawl the well-known name of Sprowle in the corner; choose a frame that will suit the style and subject, and let me carry it off to Spounding. Truly, Jimmy, I think I see the hand of Providence in this. I have come home just in the nick of time; for if you had taken the picture to Spounding yourself, never suspecting that you had not had a genuine order for it, you would have gone to pieces under the shock of the discovery, and would have meekly brought your work back to the studio."

Jimmy shifted his position uneasily, but did not answer.

"Besides," continued Brentwood, "as I told you, your picture is so much better than any Sir John would have taken the trouble to do for *The Sphinx*, that Spounding will, in time, come to be proud of the mistake."

"Yes," said Sprowle, despondingly, "but it isn't honest."

"Don't talk incongruities, Jimmy. Honesty and the editor of an illustrated weekly can have nothing to do with each other. It will do Spounding a world of good to pay a fair price to a young artist for once in his life. You go on and finish the picture, and leave the rest to me."

And so it came about in due time that Brentwood took the painting in a hansom down to the office of *The Illustrated Sphinx*. He sent up word to the editor that he had come with Sprowle's Christmas picture. He was at once shown into the editorial room. A stalwart man followed him, carrying the huge frame, which he placed on the floor with its back to the wall. Spounding did not recognise Brentwood, taking him, probably, for a man from Sir John's studio. Brentwood cut the string that surrounded the picture, and uncovered it.

"What do you think of it?" he asked, standing back.

"Splendid! splendid!" said Spounding, enthusiastically,

as he gazed at the picture, and rubbed his hands one over the other. "He never did anything better. It is in his very best manner."

Sponding whistled down a tube and asked the art editor to come up.

"I think it is just what we want, Grime," said Sponding to the art editor when he appeared.

"It will be the most popular picture of the year," replied Grime, tersely.

"Yes," said Brentwood, impartially, "he has put his best work in that picture, and he will be very glad to know that you are satisfied with it."

"Satisfied!" cried Sponding. "Tell him that we are more than satisfied with it."

"And he said to me," continued Brentwood, "that he hoped you would reproduce it creditably."

"Oh," said Sponding, "tell him not to worry himself about that. We always do ourselves and our reputation justice. We will send him proofs as soon as it is possible to obtain them."

"Now that everything is so satisfactory," said Brentwood, "would you mind writing out the cheque? I believe £300 was the sum agreed upon?"

"Quite right, quite right," said Sponding, glancing over his own letter which Brentwood had handed to him.

"Make it payable to J. Sprowle, if you please, Mr. Sponding," said Brentwood.

"Very good," replied Sponding, thinking that perhaps Sir John was a little sensitive about his new title. The cheque, written out and signed, was handed to Sprowle's representative.

"He asked me to say," remarked Brentwood, putting the cheque in his purse, "that if you wished it, he would be very pleased to put in any alterations."

"Alterations?" cried Sponding. "Oh dear no. The picture is perfect as it stands. I would not have a line of it changed, but still," he hesitatingly continued, as he approached the picture and looked critically at the name in the corner, "if he did not mind, I would like to have his full name and title, 'Sir John Sprowle,' on the picture."

"Oh," said Brentwood, raising his eyebrows; "I don't think he would agree to that, you know. Why should he put another man's name on his painting?"

"Another man's name?" said Sponding, looking up inquiringly.

"Certainly. Why should he put Sir John Sprowle's name on the picture instead of his own?"



"'SPLENDID!' SAID SPONDING."

"Instead of his own? What are you talking about, may I ask?" exclaimed Sponding.

"I'm talking about my friend, Jimmy Sprowle, and his picture."

"You mean Sir John Sprowle," said Sponding.

"Oh no, I don't," replied Brentwood; "I know them both ;

but my friend, Jimmy Sprowle, who painted this picture, is the tenant of my studio. He is the man to whom you gave the order, you know."

Sponding stared helplessly at the young man, and at last said, "I don't think I quite understand you. This picture, of course, was painted by Sir John Sprowle?"

"Oh dear no," said Brentwood; "Sir John Sprowle, capable painter though he is, could not do this sort of thing nearly so well as my friend, Jimmy Sprowle, recently of Paris, but now of London."

"But, hang it, man," shouted Sponding, full of wrath, as the truth began to break over him. "We don't want a picture by Jimmy Sprowle, of London, Paris, or anywhere else."

"Well, that is remarkable," replied Brentwood, calmly. "Why then did you order one from him?"

"Order? We never ordered a picture from Jimmy Sprowle, whoever he may be," said Sponding, contemptuously. "We sent our order to Sir John Sprowle, of the Stilvio Studios, who was at that time plain John Sprowle, Esq., Royal Academician."

"In that case then," said Brentwood, quickly, "there must have been a mistake somewhere. The letter you sent was delivered to Jimmy Sprowle at the Stilvio Studios; he painted the picture, and I have the cheque for it."

"The cheque will be of no use to you," said Sponding, angrily. "I will stop payment at once."

"I wouldn't do that if I were you," said Brentwood, slowly. "I should look at the matter calmly. By acting hastily you can easily make yourself the laughing stock of London. If I may venture to offer advice on the subject, being a perfect stranger, I should counsel you to consult with our good friend, Grime, here—the art editor. As for the painting, I don't admire this sort of thing myself, but you and Grime seemed to; and you both know it to be a good picture of its kind."

"Picture! I don't want a picture from an unknown man," cried Sponding, indignantly; "and I shall have nothing to do with it. It's a trick—a fraud. Take the wretched daub off instantly. Take it back to the trickster who sent it."

"Oh, very well then," said Brentwood, rising; "every man knows his own business best. I may say though, that legally my friend's position is practically impregnable. In whatever way the mistake occurred it was through no fault of his; he

painted the picture in perfect good faith; your messenger brought him the order, and he returned an answer by the messenger. I also happen to know, through an interview with a mutual friend this morning, that the grocer whom Jimmy honours by receiving credit from, took this letter and applied here in person to see if it was all right before giving further accommodation to Jimmy. He was assured by some one in this office that the letter was perfectly correct, and then this man, fortunately, had it stamped at Somerset House. Furthermore I am ready to go into any witness-box and testify that both



"'IT'S ALL RIGHT, JIMMY.'"

of you have expressed the utmost admiration for the picture. So you can plainly see that by indulging in a fuss you will only make fools of yourselves, for you must certainly pay in the end, whether you take the picture or not. Aside from all this, you know as well as I do that you must have a picture for your Christmas number, and that it is now too late to obtain a suitable one, unless you take some daub that no one else would have. This picture, as you also know, is as good as any you could hope to get, even by ordering at the beginning of the season; as Mr. Grime so justly said of it, it will be *the* picture of the year. My friend Jimmy is not an unknown artist by any means

He has a great reputation in Paris, especially at the cafés, where he is probably much better known than Sir John himself."

"But the thing is a trick," repeated Sponding; "why did not your friend Sprowle come himself with the picture?"

"Too busy," said Brentwood. "Too many commissions. Working day and night, that young man is. The thing I fear is that when I go back and tell him the result of this interview, he will not let you have the picture at any price. If I were you I would accept the inevitable now. I speak as a friend of both parties. You know as well as I what pictures are in the market, and available for a Christmas number. You can do as you please, of course, but if I were in your shoes I would jump at the chance of getting this picture."

Sponding and Grime consulted together, and then gazed long and critically at the painting. Finally, Sponding said, with a sigh, "I suppose we cannot help ourselves, but it looks suspiciously like a case of sharp practice."

"I may tell you," said Brentwood, "that if you use the term 'sharp practice' in connection with my name you will pay a great deal more than £300 for the privilege. I've stood about all the talk I am going to on this subject. Do you accept my statement, or is this to go farther?"

"It need go no farther," said Sponding, coming down from his perch. "We accept the picture, and will do our best with it. Nothing more need be said about the matter."

"Very well; in that case I have nothing further to say except—'Good morning.'"

* * * * *

"It's all right, Jimmy," said Brentwood, when the hansom had brought him back to the Stilvio Studios. "It's all right. Both Sponding and Grime, the art editor, were delighted with the picture; said they had never seen anything equal to it."

"Then there was no mistake after all," cried Jimmy, exultingly.

"None, except on my part, Jimmy, in the underrating your undeniable talent. That picture will be the making of you."

And it was.

A Christmas "Cabby."

BY FRANK FELLER.





"CINDER-STREWN PATHS LEAD THROUGH THE TARNISHED FIELDS TO THE ROWS OF SMOKE-STAINED COTTAGES."

The Stark Munro Letters.

BY A. CONAN DOYLE.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE HUTCHINSON.

V.

MERTON-ON-THE-MOORS,

March 5th, 1882.

You'll see from the address of this letter, Bertie, that I have left Scotland, and am in Yorkshire. I have been here three months, and am now on the eve of leaving, under the strangest circumstances, and with the queerest prospects. Good old Cullingworth has turned out a trump, as I always knew he would. But, as usual, I am beginning at the wrong end, so here goes to give you an idea of what has been happening.

I told you in my last, all about my lunacy adventure, and my ignominious return from Rathtully Castle. When I had settled for the flannel vests, which my mother had ordered so lavishly, I had only five pounds left out of my pay. With this, as it was the first money that I had ever earned in my life, I bought her a gold bangle; so behold me reduced, at once, to my usual empty-pocketed condition. Well, it was something just to feel that I *had* earned money. It gave me an assurance that I might again.

I had not been at home more than a few days when my father called me into the study, after breakfast, one morning, and spoke very seriously as to our financial position. He began the interview by unbuttoning his waistcoat, and asking me to listen at his fifth intercostal space, two inches from the left sternal line. I did so, and was shocked to hear a well-marked mitral regurgitant murmur.

"It is of old standing," he said, "but of late I have had a puffiness about the ankles, and somerenal symptoms which show me that it is beginning to tell."

I tried to express my grief and sympathy, but he cut me short, with some asperity.

"The point is," said he, "that no insurance office would accept my life, and that I have been unable, owing to competi-

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tion and increased expenses, to lay anything by. If I die soon (which, between ourselves, is by no means improbable) I must leave to your care your mother and the children. My practice is so entirely a personal one that I cannot hope to be able to hand over to you enough to afford a living."



"IT IS OF OLD STANDING."

I thought of Cullingworth's advice about going where you are least known. "I think," said I, "that my chances would be better away from here."

"Then you must lose no time in establishing yourself," said he. "Your position would be one of great responsibility if

anything were to happen to me just now. I had hoped that you had found an excellent opening with the Saltires, but I fear that you can hardly expect to get on in the world, my boy, if you insult your employer's religious and political views at his own table."

It wasn't a time to argue, so I said nothing. My father took a copy of the *Lancet* out of his desk, and turned up an advertisement, which he had marked with a blue pencil. "Read this!" said he.

I've got it before me as I write. It runs thus:—"Qualified assistant wanted, at once, in a large country and colliery practice. Thorough knowledge of obstetrics and dispensing indispensable. Ride and drive. £70 a year. Apply Dr. Horton, Merton-on-the-Moors, Yorkshire."

"There might be an opening there," said he. "I know Horton, and I am convinced that I can get you the appointment. It would at least give you the opportunity of looking round and seeing whether there was any vacancy there. How do you think it would suit you?"

Of course I could only answer that I was willing to turn my hand to anything. But that interview has left a mark upon me—a heavy, ever-present gloom away at the back of my soul, which I am conscious of even though the cause of it has for the moment gone out of my thoughts. I had enough to make a man serious before, when I had to face the world without money or interest. But now, to think of the mother, and my sisters, and little Paul, all leaning upon me when I cannot stand myself; it is a nightmare. Could there be anything more dreadful in life than to have those whom you love looking to you for help, and to be unable to give it. But perhaps it won't come to that. Perhaps my father may hold his own for years. Come what may, I am bound to think that all things are ordered for the best, though when the good is a furlong off, and we with our beetle eyes can only see three inches, it takes some confidence in general principles to pull us through.

Well, it was all fixed up, and down I came to Yorkshire. I wasn't in the best of spirits when I started, Bertie, but they went down and down as I neared my destination. How people can dwell in such places passes my comprehension. What can life offer them to make up for these mutilations of the face of nature? No woods, little grass, spouting chimneys, slate-coloured streams, sloping mounds of coke and slag, topped by

the great wheels and pumps of the mines. Cinder-strewn paths, black as though stained by the weary miners who toil along them, lead through the tarnished fields to the rows of smoke-stained cottages. How can any young unmarried man accept such a lot while there's an empty hammock in the Navy, or a berth in a merchant fore-castle? How many shillings a week is the breath of the ocean worth? It seems to me that if I were a poor man——. Well, upon my word, that "if" is rather funny when I think that many of the dwellers in those smoky cottages have twice my salary, with half my expenses.

Well, as I said, my spirits sank lower and lower until they got down into the bulb, when, on looking through the gathering gloom, I saw "Merton" printed on the lamps of a dreary, dismal station. I got out, and was standing beside my trunk and my hat-box, waiting for a porter, when up came a cheery-looking fellow, and asked me whether I was Dr. Stark Munro. "I'm Horton," said he, and shook hands cordially.

In that melancholy place the sight of him was like a fire on a frosty night. He was gaily dressed, in the first place; check trousers, white waistcoat, a flower in his buttonhole. But the look of the man was very much to my heart. He was ruddy-cheeked and black-eyed, with a jolly, stout figure and an honest, genial smile. I felt, as we clinched hands in the foggy, grimy station, that I had met a man and a friend.

His carriage was waiting, and we drove out to his residence, The Myrtles, where I was speedily introduced both to his family and his practice. The former is small and the latter enormous. The wife is dead, but her mother, Mrs. White, keeps house for him, and there are two dear little girls, about five and seven. Then there is an unqualified assistant, a young Irish student, who, with the three maids, the coachman, and the stable boy, makes up the whole establishment. When I tell you that we give four horses quite as much as they can do, you will have an idea of the ground we cover.

The house, a large square brick one, standing in its own grounds, is built on a small hill in an oasis of green fields. Beyond this, however, on every side the veil of smoke hangs over the country, with the mine pumps and the chimneys bristling out of it. It would be a dreadful place for an idle man, but we are all so busy that we have hardly time to think whether there's a view or not. Day and night we are at work, and yet the three months have been very pleasant ones to look back upon.

I'll give you an idea of what a day's work is like. We breakfast about nine o'clock, and immediately afterwards the morning patients begin to drop in. Many of them are very poor people belonging to the colliery clubs, the principle of which is that the members pay a little over a halfpenny a week all the year round, well or ill, in return for which they get medicine and attendance free. Not much of a catch for the doctors, you would say, but it is astonishing what competition there is among them to get the appointment. You see it is a certainty for one thing, and it leads indirectly to confinements and other little extras. Besides it mounts up surprisingly. I have no doubt that Horton has five or six hundred a year from his clubs alone. On the other hand, you can imagine that club patients, since they pay the same in any case, don't let their ailments go very far before they are round in the consulting room.

Well, then, by half-past nine we are in full blast. Horton is seeing the better patients in the consulting-room, I am interviewing the poorer ones in the waiting-room, and McCarthy, the Irishman, making up prescriptions as hard as he can tear. By the club rules, patients are bound to find their own bottles and corks. They generally remember the bottle, but always forget the cork. "Ye must pay a pinny or ilse putt your fore-finger in," says McCarthy. They have an idea that all the strength of the medicine goes if the bottle is open, so they trot off with their fingers stuck in the necks. They have the most singular notions about medicines. "It's that strong that a spoon will stand up in't!" is one man's description. Above all, they love to have two bottles, one with a solution of citric acid, and the other with carbonate of soda. When the mixture begins to fizz, they realise that there is, indeed, a science of medicine.

This sort of work, with vaccinations, bandagings, and minor surgery, takes us to nearly eleven o'clock, when we assemble in Horton's room to make out the list. All the names of patients under treatment are pinned upon a big board. We sit round with note-books open, and distribute those who must be seen between us. By the time this is done and the horses in, it is half-past eleven. Then away we all fly upon our several tasks. Horton, in a carriage and pair, to see the employers; I, in a dog-cart, to see the employed; and McCarthy, on his good Irish legs, to visit those chronic cases to which a qualified man can do no good, and an unqualified no harm.

Well, we all work back again by two o'clock, when we find dinner waiting for us. We may or may not have finished our rounds. If not, away we go again. If we have, Horton dictates his prescriptions, and strides off to bed, with his black clay pipe in his mouth. He is the most abandoned smoker I have ever met with, collecting the dottles of his pipes in the evening, and smoking them next morning before breakfast in the stable-yard. When he has departed for his nap, McCarthy and I get to work on the medicine. There are, perhaps, fifty bottles to put up, with pills, ointment, &c. It is quite half-past four before we have them all laid out on the shelf addressed to the respective invalids. Then we have an hour or so of quiet, when we smoke or read, or box with the coachman in the harness-room. After tea the evening's work commences. From six to nine people are coming in for their medicine, or fresh patients wishing advice. When these are settled we have to see again any very grave cases which may be on the list, and so about ten o'clock we may hope to have another smoke, and, perhaps a game of cards. Then it is a rare thing for a night to pass without one or other of us having to trudge off to a confinement, which might take us two hours, or might take us ten. Hard work, as you see; but Horton was such a good chap, and worked so hard himself, that one did not mind what one did. And then we were all like brothers in the house, our talk was just a rattle of chaff, and the patients were as homely as ourselves, so that the work became quite a pleasure to all of us.

Yes, Horton is a real, right-down good fellow. His heart is broad and kind and generous. There is nothing petty in the man. He loves to see those around him happy, and the sight of his sturdy figure and jolly, red face goes far to make them so. Nature meant him to be a healer, for he brightens up a sick-room as he did the Merton station when first I set eyes upon him. Don't imagine from my description that he is in any way soft, however. There is no one on whom one could be less likely to impose. He has a temper which is easily aflame, and as easily appeased. A mistake in the dispensing may wake it up, and then he bursts into the surgery like a whiff of east wind, his cheeks red, his whiskers bristling, and his eyes malignant. The day-book is banged, the bottles rattled, the counter thumped, and then he is off again with five doors slamming behind him. We can trace his progress, when

the black mood is on him, by those dwindling slams. Perhaps it is that McCarthy has labelled the cough mixture as the eye-wash, or sent an empty pill-box with an exhortation to take one every four hours. In any case, the cyclone comes and goes, and by the next meal all is peace once more.

I said that the patients were a very homely lot. Anyone who is over-starched might well come here to be unstiffened.



"BURSTS INTO THE SURGERY LIKE A WHIFF OF EAST WIND."

I confess that I did not quite fall in with it at once. When, on one of my first mornings, a club patient, with his bottle under his arm, came up to me and asked me if I were the Doctor's man, I sent him on to see the groom in the stable. But soon one falls into the humour of it. There is no offence meant, and why should any be taken. They are kindly, generous folk, and if they pay no respect to your profession in the abstract,

and so rather hurt your dignity, if you have any, yet they will be as leal and true as possible to yourself if you can win their respect. I like the grip of their greasy and blackened hands.

Another peculiarity of the district is that many of the manu-



"ASKED ME IF I WERE THE DOCTOR'S MAN."

facturers and colliery-owners have risen from the workmen, and have (in some cases at least) retained their old manners and even their old dress. The other day Mrs. White, Horton's mother-in-law, had a violent sick headache, and, as we are all very fond of the kind old lady, we were trying to keep things as quiet as possible downstairs. Suddenly there came a

bang! bang! bang! at the knocker, and then in an instant another rattling series of knocks, as if a tethered donkey were trying to kick in the panel. After all our efforts for silence it was exasperating. I rushed to the door to find a seedy-looking person just raising his hand to commence a fresh bombardment. "What on earth's the matter?" I asked, only I may have been a little more emphatic. "Pain in the jaw," said he. "You needn't make such a noise," said I, "other people are ill besides you." "If I pay my money, young man, I'll make such noise as I like," and actually in cold blood he commenced a fresh assault upon the door. He would have gone on with his devil's tattoo all the morning if I had not led him down the path and seen him off the premises. An hour afterwards Horton whirled into the surgery with a trail of banged doors behind him. "What's this about Mr. Usher, Munro?" he asked. "He says that you were violent towards him." "There was a club patient here who kept on banging the knocker," said I. "I was afraid that he would disturb Mrs. White, and so I made him stop." Horton's eyes began to twinkle. "My boy," said he, "that club patient, as you call him, is the richest man in Merton, and worth a hundred a year to me. However, I'll make it all right with him." I have no doubt that he appeased him by some tale of my disgrace and degradation, but I have not heard anything of the matter since.

It has been good for me to be here, Bertie. It has brought me in close contact with the working classes, and made me realise what fine people they are. Because one drunkard goes home howling on a Saturday night, we are too apt to overlook the ninety-nine decent ones by their own firesides. I shall not make that mistake any more. The kindness of the poor to the poor makes a man sick of himself. And their sweet patience. Depend upon it, if ever there is a popular rising the wrongs which lead to it must be monstrous and indefensible. I think the excesses of the French Revolution are dreadful enough in themselves, but much more so as an index to the slow centuries of misery against which they were a mad protest. And then the wisdom of the poor. It is amusing to read the glib newspaper man writing about the ignorance of the masses. They don't know the date of Magna Charta, or whom John of Gaunt married; but put a practical up-to-date problem before them, and see how unerringly they take the right side. Didn't they put the Reform Bill through in the teeth of the opposition

of the majority of the so-called educated classes? Didn't they back the North against the South when nearly all our leaders went wrong? When universal arbitration and the suppression of the liquor traffic comes, is it not sure to be from the pressure of these humble folk? They look at life with clearer and more unselfish eyes. It's an axiom, I think, that to heighten a nation's wisdom you must lower its franchise.

Do you think, Bertie, that there is such a thing as the existence of evil? If we could honestly convince ourselves that there was not, it would help us so much in formulating a rational religion. But don't let us strain truth even for such an object as that. I must confess that there are some forms of vice—cruelty, for example—for which it is hard to find any explanation, save, indeed, that it is a degenerate survival of that warlike ferocity which may once have been of service in helping to protect the community. No, let me be frank and say that I can't make cruelty fit into my scheme. But when you find that other evils which seem, at first sight, black enough, really tend in the long run to the good of mankind, it may be hoped that those which continue to puzzle us may at last be found to serve the same end in some fashion which is now inexplicable.

It seems to me that the study of life by the physician vindicates the moral principles of right and wrong. But when you look closely, it is a question whether that which is a wrong to the present community may not prove to have been a right to the interests of posterity. That sounds a little foggy, but I will make my meaning more clear when I say that I think right and wrong are both tools which are being wielded by those great hands which are shaping the destinies of the Universe; that both are making for improvement, but that the action of the one is immediate, and that of the other more slow, but none the less certain. Our own distinction of right and wrong is founded too much upon the immediate convenience of the community, and does not inquire sufficiently deeply into the ultimate effect.

I have my own views about Nature's methods, though I feel that it is rather like a beetle giving his opinions upon the Milky Way. However, they have the merit of being consoling, for if we could conscientiously see that sin served a purpose, and a good one, it would take some of the blackness out of life. It seems to me, then, that Nature, still working on the

lines of evolution, strengthens the race in two ways. The one is by improving those who are morally strong, which is done by increased knowledge, and broadening religious views. The other and hardly less important is by the killing off and extinction of those who are morally weak. This is accomplished by drink and immorality. These are really two of the most important forces which work for the ultimate perfection



"SEEN HIM OFF THE PREMISES."

of the race. I picture them as two great invisible hands hovering over the garden of life and plucking up the weeds. Looked at in one's own day one can only see that they produce degradation and misery. But at the end of a third generation from then, what has happened? The line of the drunkard and of the debauchee, physically as well as morally weakened, is either extinct or on the way towards it. Struma, tubercle,

N N

nervous disease, have all lent a hand towards the pruning off of that rotten branch, and the average of the race is thereby improved. I believe, from the little that I have seen of life, that it is a law which acts with startling swiftness, that a majority of drunkards never perpetuate their species at all, and that, when the curse is hereditary, the second generation generally sees the end of it.

Don't misunderstand me, and quote me as saying that it is a good thing for a nation that it should have many drunkards. Nothing of the kind. What I say is, that if a nation has many morally weak people, then it is good that there should be a means for checking those weaker strains. Nature has her devices, and drink is among them. When there are no more drunkards and reprobates, it means that the race is so advanced that it no longer needs such rough treatment. Then the all-wise engineer will speed us along in some other fashion. If there is truth in this view of mine, then it might illustrate a striking remark which I read the other day, to the effect that, if at any time the views of the wisest men could be eternally imposed upon the human race, the effect would always be to perpetuate monstrous error.

By Jove, old chap, I am quite ashamed of having been so didactic. But it is jolly to think that sin may have an object, and work towards good. My father says that I seem to look upon the universe as if it were my property, and can't be happy until I know that all is right with it. Well, there is just a little truth in it. It does send a glow through me when I seem to catch a glimpse of the light behind the clouds.

And now for my big bit of news, which is going to change my whole life. Whom do you think that I had a letter from, last Tuesday week? From old Cullingworth, no less. It had no beginning, no end, was addressed all wrong, and written with a very thick quill pen upon the back of a prescription. How it ever reached me is a wonder. This is what he had to say :—

“Started here in Bradfield last June. Colossal success. My example must revolutionise medical practice. Rapidly making fortune. Have invention which is worth millions. Unless our Admiralty take it up, shall make Brazil the leading naval power. Come down by next train, on receiving this. Have plenty for you to do.”—

That was the whole of this extraordinary letter which had no name to it, which was certainly reasonable enough, since no one else could have written it. Knowing Cullingworth as well as I

did, I took it all with reservations and deductions. How could he have made so rapid and complete a success in a town in which he must have been a complete stranger? It was incredible. And yet there must be some truth in it, or else he would not invite me to come down and test it. On the whole, I thought that I had better move very cautiously in the matter, for I was happy and snug where I was, and kept on putting a little by, which I hoped would form a nucleus to start me in practice. It was only a few pounds up to date, but in a year or so it might mount to something. I wrote to Cullingworth, therefore, thanking him for having remembered me, and explaining how matters stood. I had had great difficulty in finding an opening, I said, and now that I had one I was loth to give it up except for a permanency.

Ten days passed, during which Cullingworth was silent. Then came a huge telegram.

"Your letter to hand. Why not call me a liar at once? I tell you that I have seen thirty thousand patients in the last year. My actual takings have been over four thousand pounds. All patients come to me. Would not cross the street to see Queen Victoria. You can have all visiting, all surgery, all midwifery. Make what you like of it. Will guarantee three hundred pounds the first year."

Well, this began to look more like business, especially the last sentence. I took it to Horton, and asked his advice. His opinion was that I had nothing to lose, and everything to gain. So it ended by my wiring back, accepting the partnership—if it is a partnership—and to-morrow morning I am off to Bradfield, with great hopes and a small portmanteau. I know how interested you are in the personality of Cullingworth—as everyone is who comes, even at second hand, within range of his influence—and so you may rely upon it that I shall give you a very full and particular account of all that passes between us. I am looking forward immensely to seeing him again, and I trust we won't have any rows.

Good-bye, old chap, my foot is upon the thresho'd of fortune. Congratulate me.

(To be continued.)



"THE PRETTIER A TOBACCONIST'S DAUGHTER IS, THE WORSE HIS CIGARS ARE."

An Embassy.

BY ANTHONY HOPE.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY HAL HURST.

"IT'S a different thing when a fellow's going to be a peer, don't you know?" said Franklin Ford. (I don't know why I used to dislike him; he's a capital fellow.)

"What have they given it to your governor for?" I asked.

"Well, he *parted* a bit," said Franklin; "sent 'em a cheque, and told 'em they could ask for more. Then he's always voted dead straight."

"Then it's fair enough," I concluded. "Well, Lily'll make an uncommon fine peeress, Franklin, my boy."

"It's not a laughing matter," said Franklin, solemnly.

"Oh, isn't it," said I.

"I love that girl, Van, like—like blazes. But hang it, don't you know."

"If she is fit to be a gentleman's wife, she is fit to be a peer's wife," I observed, sententiously.

"Rot!" said Franklin Ford, briefly.

"But then she isn't fit to be either," said I.

"She's a dashed pretty girl," said Franklin, irrelevantly.

"Have a cigar?"

"No, thank you," said I. "The prettier a tobacconist's daughter is, the worse his cigars are;" and I lit my pipe.

"What am I to do?" asked Franklin, manfully taking a cigar. "I should feel a brute if—if I drew back, you know."

"Tell her the truth," I suggested.

"Oh, hang it," groaned Franklin.

"And give her a pony."

"Ah!" said Franklin, brightening a little.

"A pony in the hand is worth a'peer in the—Law Courts," I observed.

Franklin thought for a moment.

"Couldn't do it," he pronounced. "Haven't got the cheek to go and tell her. Besides, if I found myself there——" Franklin winked.

"That is a danger," I allowed.

"You're an impudent young devil," said Franklin, in a friendly and, indeed, complimentary tone. "Suppose you do it for me?"

"Send your scout," said I, satirically.

"Don't be an ass," remonstrated Franklin. "You might just as well. By Jove, Van, I couldn't face it. She'll—she'll cry, don't you know."

I puffed at my pipe with an obdurate air.

"You can always manage women," said Franklin.

I looked at him suspiciously ; he was quite serious. There always was a sort of solid common-sense about him.



"NEVER MIND THE PAPER; HERE'S A POUCH, MISS."

"Well, if I happen to be passing ——" I began.

"Thanks, awfully," cried Franklin. "Look here, old chap, be gentle with her. Let her down easy, because, hang it, you know, I did pretty well promise——"

"Oh, I'll be gentle with her."

"Thanks, awfully. Tell me how it goes. Well, old chap, so lo——"

I held out my hand.

"Your emotion," I remarked, "has caused you to forget the pony."

"By Jove! yes," said Franklin, with wonderful readiness. "I haven't got my cheque-book, but——"

"It would make no difference if you had. Cash, please."

Franklin observed on the suspiciousness of my disposition, and said that he would send the pony. It arrived some two hours later, and then I started out to visit Lily. I dealt with Lily's father, so I needed no excuse for the visit. On the contrary, in fact, a visit from me was expected—on the matter of my little account.

It was evening when I arrived at the shop. I was about to enter, when I observed that Lily was in conversation with a customer. I paused in the doorway, concealed by a large pile of wooden boxes, which professed to contain Havana cigars.

"How you go on!" remarked Lily.

The customer appeared pleased. He chuckled audibly.

"Say when," said he, insinuatingly.

"No I shan't—there!" said Lily.

"You're always a-putting of me off," he complained.

"Well, and who may you be?" she asked. It was exactly what I wanted to know myself, for I could see nothing but the back of his head.

"I'm the chap what's going to marry you," said the customer, with a confident nod of his bullet head.

"Lord! You know everything," she retorted, in obvious satire.

"I know a thing or two more than some."

"You don't say."

"Such as the Honourable Franklin Ford, *Esquire*." (I felt that I ought not to listen any longer, and drew more completely within the shadow of the boxes.)

"The Honourable Ford, *Esquire*!" exclaimed Lily. "And what about him, Mr. Clever?"

"I know what he did the other day."

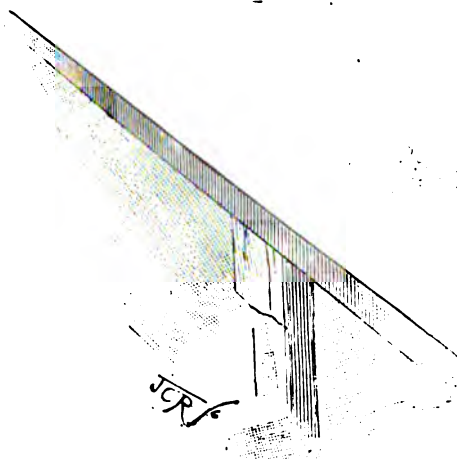
"And that you don't," said Lily.

"And that I do," returned the customer.

"Well, and what was it?"

"The same as I'd like to do."

"That's not telling anything," said Lily, in the most innocent voice imaginable.



"LILY EXAMINED THEM—AGAIN AND AGAIN."

"Nor that neither, I suppose," said the customer.

There was a sudden shuffling, and then a certain unmistakable sound, then came Lily's voice, saying,—

"And what do you call 'that way' of going on?"

"Prime!" said the customer, unrepentingly.

"Oh, you are —!" I heard Lily say; and then followed a giggle and —. But I had listened too long; I cleared my throat and stepped into the shop.

"La!" cried Lily.

"Good evening, Miss Lily," said I.

The customer turned round. He started slightly, then he raised his hat, saying, "Good evening, sir," and added, with a breathless absence of punctuation, "Half of shag please, Miss, the dark, same as I had before, never mind the paper, here's a pouch, Miss."

Woman is certainly superior to man. Lily received the order with perfect composure, placed the twopence in the till, and turned to me, smiling. The customer touched his hat again and disappeared.

"What a power in this world is twopence!" I mused.

"Beg pardon, sir?" said Lily.

I never arrive at conclusions hastily. I placed twopence on the counter. Lily smiled.

"Father'll be glad to see the colour of yours, sir," she remarked.

"Don't wander from the point," said I, severely. "I want just what that young man had for his."

"Shag, sir—for you?"

"Are we not all brethren?"

With a smile Lily weighed the shag and gave it to me.

"There, sir! Is that right?"

"So far," said I.

Lily leant her hands on the counter; I followed her example. The counter was not broad.

"I have got a little present for you," said I; and I produced Franklin's bundle of notes.

A cry escaped from Lily's lips.

"From the Honourable Franklin Ford, Esquire," I explained, gravely.

Lily's eyes met mine.

"Oh! From Mr. Ford, sir?"

"Precisely. He is leaving Oxford shortly. He is very fond of you. In fact, you are a very nice girl, Lily."

"You are very kind, I'm sure, sir."

"Are you distressed, Lily?" I asked, curiously; and I handed her the notes.

Lily examined them—again and again. I waited in suspense for her answer. It came at last.



"'YOU ALMOST DESERVE IT,' SAID LILY."

"Mr. Ford's a gentleman, sir," she said, in a final tone.

I nodded; yet I wished to be sure that she was not distressed. I rested my hands on the counter again.

"Well, you almost deserve it," said Lily.

"Just as much as Tom Duggan," said I.

Lily blushed—not, however, from distress ; for I became at



"GRINNED IN A BASHFUL WAY."

the same moment certain that she was not distressed. I was determined to be in a position to reassure Franklin.

"You won't tell — ?" she whispered.

"Mr. Ford?"

"Law, sir—I mean Tom."

"The deuce you do!" said I, and, taking my half-ounce of shag, I left the shop.

It seems difficult to understand, but, when I returned radiant and told Franklin of the entire success of my mission, and of what that fortunate customer had obtained for the sum of two-pence, he was not pleased. He went at once to the top of his stairs and yelled:

"Hi, there! where are you? Brandy and soda—and be quick about it."

I smoked placidly. Franklin's under-scout bustled in with the brandy and soda.

"Shall I open it, sir?" he asked. Then his eye fell on my smiling face.

"Open it, of course, Duggan," said Franklin, impatiently.

Duggan opened it; then he looked at me again. I nodded reassuringly. He grinned in a bashful way and escaped.

"Who the devil was the chap?" Franklin burst out.

"I don't know," said I, sipping the beverage.

Franklin poked the fire fiercely.

"She's going to marry him, I suppose?" said he.

"Your pony will help," said I.

"She must be," said Franklin, "or she wouldn't have let him—— would she, Van?" And he fixed inquiring eyes on me.

I took a long drink of brandy and soda.

"Will the Torpid bump again to-morrow?" I asked.

"Damn the Torpid!" said Franklin Ford.



A Comio Naturalist.

By G. B. BURGIN.

(PHOTOGRAPHS BY MESSRS. FRADELLE & YOUNG.)

THE little inn at Bramber was very comfortable, with its cosy sanded floor and homely aspect. Half-a-dozen dripping rustics had come in for their mid-day pint of beer, and an unfortunate hawker looked wistfully through the half-open door at an ominous notice hanging upon the wall, which bore the following legend: "Our credit department is closed for repairs; our credit barrel may be open to-morrow. What do you think?" The hawker hastily arrived at the conclusion that this ironical statement did not admit of any thought whatever, and abruptly departed.



MR. POTTER.

"I'd let him alone, sir, if I was you," said the landlord impressively, as I patted an aged Danish hound which slowly walked in through the open door; "them spotted dawgs is a bit uncertain in their temper. That old un there came down into the country to die five years ago, and he's cheered hisself up by biting people ever since. I wish he would die, but he's much too artful."



MAN-TRAP.

I let the "plum-pudding" dog alone, and asked my landlord if there was anything to be done in Bramber, except drink beer, until it left off raining. The landlord brightened up visibly as he kicked the spotted dog out of the bar-room. "What you want to do, sir," he said, "arter you've had your



TIGER'S HEAD.

bread and cheese, is to see Mr. Potter's Museum. He's a wonderful man, is Potter; there's no animal for miles round he ain't had a go at in the stuffing line. The Museum's only a few doors further up; you'll see enough there to keep you busy till this shower's over."



CANARY.

I took the vice and went to the Museum, charmingly situated in a gay little garden a few yards back from the main street. On my ringing the bell, Mr. Potter appeared with a suggestion that I had better come in out of the rain as it was a trifle damp. Once inside the Museum, the weather was forgotten. Mr. Potter is not only a naturalist but a humorist also, and in his treatment of animals has hit upon an entirely new line.

"Well now, Mr. Potter," I said, after we had made a tour of his collection, "everything must have a beginning; tell me all about your calling, and how you accumulated these curiosities, from the man-trap in the corner to that somewhat venerable-looking canary in yonder case."

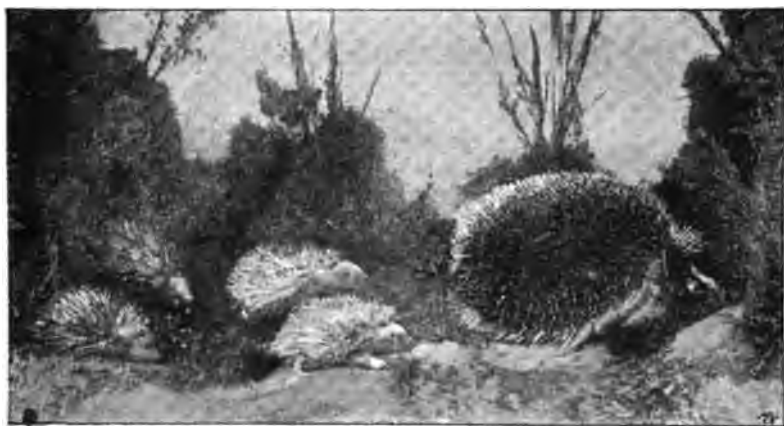


HERON.



OWLS.

Mr. Potter's memory went back to earlier days. "It's fortunate you made that remark about the canary, sir," he said, "because it's the very first bird I stuffed; a rare job it was, too. He was the first pet I ever had, and when he died I thought I'd like to stuff him. Stuffing a bird's a very difficult job till you know how to do it, as I found out by experience. The first thing was to set it up—I couldn't get the wires right—and to set up a bird you have to put wires into his legs and neck after taking out his inside. To take out the inside you cut the bird open on the breast, and move his internals and clean the skull. Next, take the skin of the skull right off and cut out the neck altogether, and dress with arsenical paste, which I



HEDGEHOGS.

always prepare myself. The head is stuffed with wool and tow, and the skin turned back again ready for mounting. I make a tow body, according to the pattern of the one taken out, and place it inside the skin; a wire goes up the bird's neck from the false body into the skull. That settles the neck. When you skin the bird you cut out the legs at the second joint, and run a wire up each into the tow body; you also want a wire through the tail and into the body. When your wires are all right, sew the breast-cut up with cotton, and stand the bird on a block. After your bird is up, get his wings into the proper position, and bind all over with cotton to keep the feathers in their proper places until they get dry, which generally takes about a fortnight. The next

thing is to put the bird's eyes in. Of course, they must be the right size and colour, and I keep different kinds in stock. The way to fix the eyes is to put a little putty in the sockets, and gently press them into their places. The time it takes to stuff a bird differs according to size. A canary can be done in about a couple of hours; an owl would take the best part of a day. I make the cases myself, and arrange the backgrounds before the birds are put in.

"I soon came to a standstill with my first canary, for, do what I would, I couldn't make him look life-like, so let him alone



RATS STRALING EGGS.

until I'd had a good night's rest to think it over, and then tried again. I was so pleased with my success that I did something else, and though I've been at it over fifty years I learn something fresh with every beast and bird I stuff. It soon came natural to me to watch the habits and appearance of birds and animals. Many a time I've gone into the country to find out some point. In this way I've picked up a good deal of information about things."

"Some birds and animals are very artful, I suppose, Mr. Potter?"

"There's a good many artful things in this world," said Mr.

Potter, reminiscently; "but rats are about the artfullest. You mayn't believe they steal eggs, but they do; and that is how they do it (pointing to a case). A clergyman, who was very fond of rats, told me all about it once. Some people suppose rats lie on their backs holding on to the egg with their legs, and then other rats seize 'em by the tail and pull 'em along, egg and all; but I've never seen rats do this myself, nor heard talk of anyone else who has. The way a rat takes an egg is under the chin and front paws, and jumps along with it till he gets to his hole, where he can eat in peace. I don't mind brown rats, but I dislike white ones. Some time ago I had two white ones given me, but they were so spiteful and bit the children so often, that I put the cage out of their reach. When feeding the



"A FRIEND IN NEED."

rats I did not take the cage down, but one day heard a feeble squeaking, and fancied there must be some young ones. On examination I found nine young ones, so I kept them until they were large enough to stuff, and made a family party of the whole lot. There is that 'Tap Room' there, filled with a decidedly rowdy lot of rats enjoying themselves after business hours. I got most of them from my wheat-stack on the hill. When the wheat was threshed, out came the rats only to be knocked on the head by the village boys. Some of the rats play dominoes, one reads a paper, the others enjoy their pipes. Rats are very difficult to put into proper attitudes because of their short fore-legs."

"Aren't some animals very cruel sometimes?"

"Some animals have good points and some have bad," said Mr. Potter, oracularly. "About the bloodthirstiest of the lot is



RABBITS.

a stoat or a weasel. It's his nature to live principally on blood. One day, when I was a boy, I was up in Bramber Castle, sitting in the bushes and listening for things, when I heard a rabbit squeal as he ran down into the moat with a stoat after him. The stoat jumped on the rabbit's back and sucked his blood. I waited till the rabbit got weak, drove

off the stoat, and took it home. The stoat had bitten it on the poll. After a while the stoat came back to look for it. I've never known a stoat eat a rabbit; it always sucks its blood."

"Haven't you found that some birds are great thieves?"

"Magpies 'll take anything shiney they can get. I've kept lots of jackdaws and taught 'em to talk and call me by name, but I've no faith in splitting a bird's tongue to make it talk better. Jackdaws are such thieves I've had to get rid of 'em and take to starlings instead. The best way to teach a starling to talk is to keep him in the dark, and go and say things to him until he gradually learns.



RABBIT WITH TUSKS.



FOX.

Now, there's a rook I know living at Ringmer, near Lewes; it was taken from the nest and brought up in a house. It's wings were not cut, and it was allowed to go about where it pleased. This

rook showed itself to be very affectionate, and grew perfectly tame with the people it knew. The curious part about it is that it mates every spring, and brings up a family in a tree not very far from the house. During the breeding season it doesn't wholly forsake its friends, but will come to the house for food and take anything it can steal. It once managed to gobble up a quarter of a pound of butter, but generally took whatever was handy to carry off for the young ones. After it has brought up and educated its family, the bird comes back to the house for the winter. This particular rook has made many attempts to get the female to chum up with the family every year, but the wife has generally been too shy to come near the house. It persuaded one to come down to help steal something, but she would not allow herself to be touched by anyone. I've never had a rook



THE BURIAL OF LITTLE COCK ROBIN.

myself for a pet. Hawks and owls I could never do anything with; they don't seem to have any intelligence. Dogs, as you know, sir, are mostly pretty bright. I daresay you've heard of shepherds teaching a young dog not to steal eggs by putting a very hot one in his mouth and holding the jaw down over it. I don't believe you can get a dog to look at an egg after that."

I gently recalled Mr. Potter to the canary episode.

"Well, after I'd done my canary, people encouraged me to persevere. If they saw any bird or animal they thought I would like, they'd bring or send it to me. At last I got the idea of putting a case of birds together to illustrate 'The History of Cock Robin.' It took me all my spare time for over six or seven years, and I used over a hundred specimens of British birds, including, though not actually necessary to the story, the cuckoo; nightingale, goldfinch, hawfinch, brambling, and bunting's;



SQUIRRELS CAROUSING.

I also threw in a few butterflies. The bull himself was the most difficult of all. At last I bought a model, as it was impossible to get a real bull, however small, into the case. When I had bought my model it hadn't any hair or skin, so I got a calf-skin,



FOUR-LEGGED CHICKEN.

cut the hair off, and stuck it on the model with glue. When I had finished my 'Cock Robin' cage I was living at the Castle Hotel here, and exhibited it in the garden bower. All the young ladies from the school here came to see it, and one of them took her hat off and collected a few shillings from her companions. From that time I gradually began to keep a collection. I never thought, when I started, to make a Museum, but the thing gradually grew

of itself. Soon I began to want more room. My father had a new tea-shed put up in the garden, and so I used that as a show-room.

"The next thing I did was 'The Squirrel's Carousal.' It was very difficult to get squirrels. Most of them came from Wiston Park (pronounced Wisson), and were given me by the keepers. You see four of the squirrels sit at cribbage, and two others play all-fours, with a friend to do the pegging; the others read papers, smoke and drink just like human beings.



FOUR-LEGGED CHICKEN.

The waiters are bringing in champagne on trays, whilst a

couple of young squirrels serve dessert. The whole thing was entirely my own idea. I made all the furniture myself.

"After I'd finished with the squirrels I was watching some young guinea-pigs playing about one day, and thought they'd do capitally for a cricket match, so I collected thirty-five of them, and set to work. The band numbers thirteen performers, with a bandmaster, and the players are hard at it—batsmen, wicket-keeper, bowlers, fieldsmen, umpires, and scorers. My great trouble was to give the cricket match a band, as I could not buy instruments for the performers anywhere, and had to make them myself. The way I made them was to copy designs from the cover of a musical instrument-maker's book. I made chalk models from my drawings, got some block tin, melted it in a clay pipe over the fire, and ran it into the moulds. I failed



A GUINEA PIG CRICKET MATCH.

a good many times because the metal would not run all the way round the mould, and I had to make another mould in chalk. Some of the instruments took two days each to make. When I was in bed and asleep I worked them out in my dreams."

"Weren't those 'Athletic Toads' rather difficult to set up?"

"Yes. I caught my toads, poisoned them, and cut out the bodies. The curious thing about these toads was that when I picked up the skins the day after I had killed them, the legs still opened and shut. I have never known this happen in any other case. The toad's skin is so fine that it about covers a sixpence. For 'The House that Jack Built' I had to buy a model of a cow. Unfortunately it had leather ears, and buttons for eyes. Here I was in difficulties again. What I did was to buy a calf's skin, but the trouble now was to get the hair to lie properly. I had to pick it out from all sorts of directions



THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT.

in order to make it fit. The horns were made from the tips of real ones, and there you see my cow. The next difficulty was the cock that crowed in the morn. First of all I bought a gutta-percha model on which to put the feathers, then took the feathers from some bantams and glued them on one at a time. The wings were made of bird's wings powdered over with bantam's feathers; the beak and legs are taken from a small chicken. The hen was made in the same way, and the eggs in the nest are a wren's."

"Didn't these rabbits take a long time to stuff, Mr. Potter?"



RABBIT'S SCHOOL.

"I made 'The Rabbit's Village School' next, in 1888. There are forty-eight rabbits in it. I wanted fifty, but could not get

them; and made the round of all the different villages so as to procure as much variety of colour as possible, and have them the same size; they are mostly about a month old. When I got my rabbits I went up to our village school, saw how it was arranged—desks and books and black-boards—and came away with a plan of it in my head. I made the slates, books, and inkstands. The inkstands are in chalk; the slates black paper. I bought the pens and



CHARMAN'S DOG.

pencils and cut them up into little ones, but, when it came to making clothes, was obliged to call in Mrs. Potter and the children to do the petticoats and stockings. The first class are writing in copy books. One poor little chap stands on the form crying; he has just been caned; and his chum is looking up at him as much as to say, 'Never mind, old fellow, its all over now.' The second class are at their arithmetic. One bunny sharpens his pencil, another holds up his hand, and that one in the front row is copying from another. The next class are reading. You see how that fellow is catching it from the teacher. The last class are busy at needlework. The



A FAMILY GROUP.

master's a fortnight older than his pupils, and a pretty black and white; the grey and white mistress is about the same age. The

assistant master, who attends to the reading, is yellow ; he's a week younger than the master and mistress, and a week older than most of his pupils.

"That king-fisher's nest over there I found in an old saw-pit close to some trees. Some people say the king-fisher builds in a rat's hole, but a man told me he'd seen this bird at work, and I watched it carefully for about three weeks. The nest is built of fish bones about three feet inside the bank. I managed to get it out all right with the seven eggs.

"In 'The Sporting Party' you can see a ferreter and his assistant at work. The little figure at the bottom is meant for C. Charman, who is a well-known man about here. He once had a wonderful dog, which I stuffed. It was lost for twenty-one days, having been buried under a straw rick by a threshing



TEA AND CROQUET PARTY.

machine, and was found still alive by the man who cut out the rick. This proved to be a most unfortunate dog. Six months later a gentleman took it for a rabbit by a mistake, and gave it a tremendous peppering. You'd have thought, sir, after this adventure, that dog would have stopped at home and led a peaceful life. So it did for twelve months ; but, one day, it was looking out of the hay-loft window, when it saw a rat crossing the stable yard. Of course, nothing would suit that dog but to jump out of the window after the rat ; consequently it smashed its collar-bone and had to be destroyed. Then it was stuffed, and put in here as a warning to other dogs not to jump out of windows.

"No ; as a rule I don't have much difficulty in getting animals for my groups, but when it came to the ' Kittens' Tea



KITTENS AT PLAY.

and Croquet Party,' it was another story altogether. Children seemed to know and I had to be selections. For a not get a pure day a lady sent one for me, but the pleased with it that let me have it. At over to me and that hardly believe, sir, disappeared in the about that time.



A EUPHRAILIOUS MATRON.

The little kitten in the doorway was brought to me by a young lady because it



A DOUBLE-FACED KITTEN. who lives next

had been deserted by its mother and died, which was fortunate, as I wanted one just about that size. In 'The Kittens' Wedding' the bridesmaids were dressed by a lady



TWINS.

door; my little daughters did the remainder. The officiating clergyman's book is made out of a time-table. It was very hard work to dress the kittens, and I had to stick up the bride's finger when I stuffed her, so that it would hold the ring properly.



KITTEN WITH EIGHT LEGS AND TWO TAILS.

"It's rather curious," continued Mr. Potter, picking up a glass case, containing a mysterious mass, "the way wasps build their nests. In spring they get sap from old rotten posts and rails and mix it with a green material made from leaves. The queen wasp starts the nest. When the first brood is hatched they begin to add to it, and so it goes on until there is a large colony all proceeding from one wasp. A wasp's nest is generally a kind of muddy grey; a hornet's is of a deep yellow."

"And what is the uncanny looking beast over there, Mr. Potter?"



A MARAUDER.

"That," said Mr. Potter, "is a kinkajou, which came to an untimely end owing to bad temper. One day it tore its master's wrist open; the butler seized the kinkajou, banged it into a box, and slammed the lid down with such force that the animal was



KITTENS' WEDDING.

killed. You see that goat over there with the monkey on his back? Well, the goat came from Wiston Park; it was so wild and active that it could not be kept in the park. As it led all the others astray, it was shot and sold to a rag-and-bone man, from whom I purchased it. The monkey was given me by a friend. I think it's clearing up a bit now."

Five minutes later the sun and a band of visitors from Brighton came out together. I left Mr. Potter endeavouring to restrain a small boy who wanted to ride the goat, whilst another group of inquiring juveniles wistfully deplored the fact that the glass coverings prevented their appropriating the squirrels. Mr. Potter deserves well of his fellows, if only for his untiring industry and good humour.



WHO SAID "RABBITS?"



"ONE OF THEM SANG FOR US 'THE LOST CHORD.'"

Two in the Bush.

BY F. FRANKFORT MOORE.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. JACK.

"**A**T last, at last," said Chris Stafford, "I begin to perceive a streak of local colour on the horizon—at last I begin to realise in a faint and far-off way that we are in the depths of the Australian bush."

"Yes," said Eric, once more, "I am going to bake a damper for the new chums."

"That's what has set me down with a bang in the middle of Australia," resumed Chris. "Up to the moment that you were good enough to make that promise—or is it a threat?—about the damper, I felt that I had not got anything like the value of my passage money out here—that's what I felt. I don't know what Phil's exact sentiments on this point may be, nor am I likely to know; Phil is so absurdly reticent." A fine derision was in his voice as he glanced in my direction.

"The time for reticence is over," I remarked. "If hitherto I have laid myself open to the contempt of the Colony in general by my maintenance of silence, it was simply because I felt our grievances too deeply: I could not trust myself to speak of them. A fortnight in Australia without catching a glimpse of a 'billy'—without drinking a single damper——"

"Drinking—drinking a damper!" shouted Eric. "Why, you fool of a new chum, a damper isn't something to drink, it's something to eat—you'll find that out presently."

"Soon enough, I dare say," said Chris. "Well, though I admit, for the sake of argument, that I had a notion that a damper was not a liquid, yet this fact does not tend to lessen the responsibility that rests upon you and other Australians for the deplorable ignorance of my brother new chum, Philip. Was he to know by intuition that a damper was solid?"

"There you are," said I to Eric. "That's a poser for you. I had always a notion that the damper was the thing you drank, and that the 'billy' was the thing you ate."

Eric Macray paused in the act of unloosing the compact bundle which had been strapped to his saddle, and which he termed, with the airy *insouciance* of the graduated bushman, his

"swag." He stared first at me and then at Chris. Then he burst out :

" Well, of all the—
ah, you're new chums."

" There it is again—
another endeavour to de-
prive us of the vivid
charm of local colour,"
said Chris. " You
notice that, Phil?"

" I grieve to say
that I do, indeed,"
said I.

" I knew
you would
notice it."



You see even
Phil notices it,
Eric?"

" Notices
what?"

" Notices
what? Can you
ask?"

" I've no
hesitation in
asking."

" The ab-
sence of hesita-
tion in asking is
distinctly an Eng-
lish trait, so there's
a further loss of local
colour. What we

noticed with pain, Eric, was your sudden turning aside from your purpose just now, when you were about to swear at us for new

chums. Now, as no one has sworn at us as we fully expected to be sworn at—in fact, as we had every right to believe we should be sworn at in Australia—can you blame us if we feel somewhat mortified?”

“We were certainly induced under false pretences to visit Australia,” said I. “We have heard from our earliest youth of the fulness, the freshness, the buoyancy of bush swearing, and yet when we come to the country, fully expecting to be made aware of its exuberance, we find that even you—you who have promised to make us fully acquainted with Australia—check yourself in an outburst that promised much, and address us with comparative courtesy, merely calling us fools, idiots, and new chums.”

“As if new-chumming was a lost art that we were reviving. Yes, I desire to associate myself with the bitter cry of my friend,” said Chris.

“In regard to the swearing?” asked Eric.

“In regard to the absence of swearing,” replied Chris.

“By George! if you continue in that irritating style you’ll have nothing to complain of,” said Eric, grimly.

“‘By George’—he says ‘by George,’ Chris; fancy any man playing the part of an Australian bushman saying ‘by George.’”

“It is pitiable—‘by George,’ when we were looking for—on second thoughts I’ll not say what we were looking for.”

By this time Eric had rolled up his sleeves and was clearing a place where it was plainly his intention to make a fire. Chris and I had also dismounted and removed the saddles from our horses.

“Then there’s the coo-ee,” said Chris. “We haven’t heard a single coo-ee since we entered the bush. I’ve always been under the impression that the Australian bush rang with perpetual coo-ees.”

“And what about Lindsay Gordon—the bush poet?” said I. “We haven’t heard Lindsay Gordon once quoted. And you call this the bush?”

“Take the horses down to the water-hole, and give over trying to be funny,” said Eric. “Borrowed horses should not be treated like borrowed books. Clear off now while I make that damper.”

“Damper—oh, pleasant word,” cried Chris. “It compensates for the absence of everything that we looked for. We

complain no longer ; we recover our spirits. In this paradoxical country it's the damper that raises our spirits. Yes, yes, we are in the bush, indeed."

We led the horses down to where a stream that trickled through a shallow valley broadened over the flat ground at the side of the bush track, and earned for itself the name of a water-hole. The water was quite good enough to make tea with, and almost good enough for people who were not fastidious to dip their hands in.

"Why water-hole?" asked Chris.

He was a Cambridge man, and therefore of a speculative turn.

"Australian bush," said I. "For that matter why damper?"

"Or why bush, if it comes to that?"

"Or why anything? I think it's very decent of old Eric to bother with us. It's more than any chap at home would do."

"What most impressed me was Mr. Roberts' lending us three horses for our excursion. The true friend is the friend who lends you a horse."

"And he mentioned that he had just had a couple of his best stolen by some rascals in his employment. It strikes me, my lad, that there's some local colour in such hospitality as Mr. Roberts'."

And there certainly was.

Chris and I were spending our six months' holiday in Australia. We had spent our last in India. We had landed at Sydney, and we had not laid ourselves open to the ridicule of the people there by suggesting that we had ever seen a lovelier harbour than theirs.

We had brought with us a portfolio of letters to various important persons in the neighbourhood of Sydney, and the result of presenting a few of these letters was that we were kept for a fortnight exploring Sydney Harbour under various conditions—mostly pleasing.

But we had not come to Australia for the sake of the yachting. We longed to become acquainted with the bush. The smallest amount of persuasion was sufficient to obtain the co-operation of Eric Macray—we had all been in one house at Eton, and he was now Private Secretary to the most notable of all the imported notabilities of the Colony. He was on terms of easy

familiarity with the bush and bush life, and he had planned out an excursion for us.

Most of it, we were irritated to find, was by train ; but after two days' travelling we arrived at Mavourneen, which we found to be an enormous sheep station owned by an Irish gentleman named Roberts—one of the many friends of Eric Macray. Mr. Roberts was the soul of hospitality, and his daughters seemed glad to obtain a new audience for their songs.

One of them sang for us "The Lost Chord."

This was vastly pleasant, but it was not the bush, and it was for the bush we were longing. Eric seemed contented enough with Mavourneen, and three days had passed before we got him moved.

My idea was that, as we had provided ourselves



"THE SOUL OF HOSPITALITY."

with bush costume—wide hats, high boots, and red shirts—we should tramp to the next station, which was forty miles away, and thus in the very heart of the bush. My enterprise found little favour.

"What, do you mean to pose as amateur sundowners?" said Mr. Roberts. "Don't think of it."

Now to my uninformed mind, the idea of being a sundowner had a certain picturesqueness about it, but I said, nothing more on the subject. It was then that we became acquainted with something of the measure of Colonial hospitality, for Mr. Roberts insisted on providing us with horses for our week's excursion.

We started for Moorcroft, the station of another friend of Eric's, Mr. Sinclair, before sunrise, and in order that we might realise in the amplest way the meaning of bush life, Eric had promised to bake us a damper, and to provide us with tea out of a "billy."

We had halted toward the afternoon at the water-hole to allow of his fulfilling his promise.

When we returned from watering the horses to the space which Eric had cleared for the fire, we found him in excellent spirits. The fire, to our amazement, had lighted easily—we did not know at the moment that his "swag" included a bundle of resin-tipped sticks. His hands and arms, and, indeed, his person generally, were dabbed with flour. He was clearly making the threatened damper.

"Now," said he, as he placed the most unpromising hillock of dough among the ashes—observing some safeguards—"now, you'll soon know all about a damper."

I fancy that we did.

It was the fault of the fire, Eric said, and we could not contradict him with any chance of success.

Anyhow we knew all about that damper.

The philological mystery of its name was revealed.

Luckily we had been provided with some eatables, through the forethought of the elder Miss Roberts. We preferred the eatables to the damper. The "billy" of tea, however, we admitted to be a great success, and it was certainly very strong.

We had already done more than thirty miles of our journey toward Moorcroft, but we had still ten miles before us, so we pushed on without delay. When we ventured to suggest to our guide that it would be nightfall before we could possibly reach the station, he said,—

"What of that?"

"Nothing," said I; "only your friend can't possibly expect us, and—well, Chris and I at least are strangers."

"You are," said Eric, "or you wouldn't be idiotic enough to suggest that you'd be otherwise than welcome at a bush station, at whatever hour you might arrive."

He then began to give us a few instances of the hospitality of the bush—how at such a station as Moorcroft, a

traveller, who was a complete stranger to the owner of the station, had been entertained by the family for two years, not a question being asked of him during all this time as to whence he had come or whither he was going, and when.

Another even more striking instance was that of the owner of a station who had knowingly entertained for several months a man who believed that Ibsen was a poet and a dramatist, and who had a theory regarding the meaning of "The Master Builder."

After this the

story of how a squatter had shared his house with the son of his hereditary enemy seemed tame.

"In another hour," said Eric, as we rode along the track up the side of an apparently interminable gully, "we'll be sitting at



"TOOK CARE TO STOCK HIS CELLAR."

supper at Moorcroft, and you chaps will be making the girls laugh by telling them of the damper fiasco. Oh, yes, there are two girls in addition to Mrs. Sinclair, who is herself young and charming."

"In spite of all this," said Chris, "I'll be heartily pleased when we come within hail of the station. This is a plucky little horse, but he's getting a trifle groggy about the legs."

"And the Sinclairs aren't the sort of people who have nothing on their table but mutton, mind you," continued Eric; "they've a first-class cook."

"Can she make a palatable damper?" I ventured to inquire.

"And Jack Sinclair took care to stock his cellar before he had a sheep on the run," Eric went on, ignoring every interruption. "Yes, you new chums will learn something more than you already know on the subject of bush hospitality. For my own part I fancy that a magnum—all Sinclair's champagne is in magnums—of the widow's '84—not ridiculously dry——"

"But at the same time not ridiculously sweet."

"A magnum of the Veuve Clicquot or some other wine with a character about it, would, I say, not be sneered at by me"; and Eric encouraged the horse he was riding to surmount the difficulties of an awkward piece of scrub.

"Magnum est veritas," said Chris; "which freely translated means that a magnum is the right sort. Certainly when I see the foil I'll acknowledge that bush hospitality is a virtue which like first and passionate love, and Adam's recollection of his fall, stands alone."

"In less than an hour you'll admit that all your previous ideas regarding hospitality will need to be carefully revised," said Eric. "Did I mention that Sinclair had contrived a way of pumping up the water to a swimming bath among the trees behind his house? Oh, yes, he's a clever chap. When I was at his station last year I made use of that bath, I can tell you. Down you go into the clear water after a hard day's riding, and you come up a new man."

"Push on for goodness' sake," said Chris, somewhat huskily.

"And then to sit out on the verandah after a capital dinner, smoking Jack Sinclair's cigars, while the girls sing Songs of Araby in the drawing-room! Now we'll need to go carefully along the track. It's getting very dark."

We had toiled up the slope of the gully, and before we gained

the highest part of the track among the scrub the stars were appearing. Our horses were getting uncertain about their feet, but they went gamely along. We did not exchange a word. The picture that our guide had drawn for us filled our hearts with emotions too deep to be expressed in words.

In the course of half-an-hour we had reached the end of the gully, and were facing a splendid stretch of billowy downs. Our tired horses raised their heads and made by no means a bad attempt at a canter. In less than another half-hour we were riding among the blue gums that had been allowed to stand as an ornamental fringe to the house.

"Thank heaven, thank heaven!" cried Chris, fervently, as we got upon a broad avenue, at the end of which a group of buildings loomed.



"DELIVERED A
LONG HYENA-LIKE HOWL."

"The place is very quiet," said Eric; "perhaps they are all at supper. Never mind, we'll rouse them with a coo-ee."

He rose in his stirrups and delivered a long hyena-like howl. This, he assured us, was a genuine bush coo-ee.

We doubted it.

The yell was not responded to, and Eric repeated it. Then

we heard certain banging sounds that resembled the closing rather than the opening of doors. When I made a suggestion to this effect, Eric turned upon me with a wearied fierceness, and told me that it would be well if I were to remember that we were in Australia and not England.

"Or Carinthia in the days of Goldsmith," added Chris. "They do not shut the door against the houseless stranger in this region."

"All right," said I; "only that banging ——"

"Was probably the closing of the cellar-door after Mr. Sinclair left that apartment bearing a magnum of Clicquot," said Chris. "He most likely recognised Eric's coo-ee. I fancy that anyone who had ever heard it would be able to pick it out again among ten thousand."

"Oh, come along, and be hanged to you," growled Eric, urging his horse to a canter.

We followed him more leisurely. We thought it better that we should arrive at the house when the rough edge would be taken off the surprise that Mr. Sinclair would undoubtedly feel, after Eric had told him that he had come with a few friends to spend a day or two at Moorcroft; but when we got to the end of the avenue we found our guide staring at the house, for the house was in complete darkness. The night was sufficiently clear to allow of our perceiving the outline of the windows, and of our seeing also that all the windows had shutters, and that the shutters were closed.

"Is it possible that some one is dead?" whispered Eric. "Poor Jack Sinclair! my old friend ——"

"If any one of you comes a step closer to the house I'll send a bullet through his head," came a voice—a female voice—apparently from the roof.

"Hallo," cried Eric. "What's the meaning of this?"

"An unexplained phase of bush hospitality," I murmured.

"You are under a mistake, whoever you are," sang out Eric, making a hollow attempt to laugh, but only producing a gurgle.

"Yes, there is a mistake, and you have made it," came the voice. "I know you all. Clear off this station. The troopers are on your track."

"What do you mean?" cried Eric. "Oh, this is quite absurd. We're friends of Mr. Sinclair."

"I'll give you till I count three," said the voice. "I fire at three. One—two——"

The report of a revolver—the bullet made a whiz as it went past my head—came with the promised precision. My horse whirled about of his own accord; Eric's did the same and went with a rush down the avenue.

"Madam," said Chris, quite politely, "if you will be good enough to allow us to explain, I think I can satisfy you——"

"I fire when I come to three," cried the voice from the unseen person. "One—two——"

We heard the sound of the shot, but it was from a distance. The moment the deliberate counting began, we sent our horses flying after Eric's down the avenue of blue gums. I could scarcely believe that, after a journey of forty miles, any horses would have been able to go as these did.

We pulled up out of revolver range, and then, for the first time, we became aware of the resources of bush swearing.

Eric gave us the sample.

"What the—— oh, some fool is at the bottom of this! Why the—— oh, it's some joke—an infernally stupid one!"

"Your friend Mr. Sinclair is a Scotchman, I think you said?" I remarked, when Eric had spent himself in vituperation.

"I can't see the joke in emptying revolvers into space in the darkness," said Chris. "Some of the bullets might chance



"COUNTING THE CHAMBERS OF AN ENORMOUSLY LARGE REVOLVER."

to hit. Which of the young ladies was it that counted—one—two——?”

“Hang it all,” said Eric, through his set teeth. “I tell you what it is, boys: I’ll break into that house or be shot before another hour has passed.”

“Then it’s shot ye’ll be, me gentlemen, so ye will,” came a voice from the blue gums at our right; and, before I could turn my head, I was almost ridden down by a trooper on a big black horse. I had a sense of being in the middle of a charge of heavy cavalry, and this was in its way startling, being outside the everyday experience of an ordinary man.

Probably some seconds had elapsed before I recovered myself, and then I found that I was in an excellent position for counting the chambers of an enormously large revolver held in an enormously large hand.

I was not so completely fascinated by the sight but that I could hear the remonstrances which Eric Macray was addressing to some person who had clearly caused him irritation. I had no notion that Eric possessed such a command of language.

I turned my eyes away from the plethoric revolver, which was being held by a stalwart trooper a yard or so from my face, and then I became aware of the exact situation so far as we were concerned. We were in the hands of four troopers of the mounted police. There was a revolver for each of us and one over. Eric was the only one of us who was actually violent. Merely being visitors to Australia, Chris and I felt a certain reluctance to make any attempt to express our feelings. We felt that it would be taking a liberty, so to speak, to interfere actively in what was, after all, a purely local occurrence. We left it to Eric, who had lived for some years in the country, to try and come to an understanding with the troopers who carried revolvers of so large a calibre.

He did not seem to make much progress in his explanation to the troopers. He called them collectively fools, idiots, and blockheads, and then he referred to each of them in violent terms, winding up by accusing the sergeant of being an Irishman.

“An Oirishm’n—Holy Kitty! he calls me an Oirishm’n!” shouted the sergeant. “An Oirishm’n! I’ve shot a man for less.”

“Come, my good fellow,” said Eric. “Take yourself and

your brother idiots off as soon as you can. I've told you who I am—that must be enough for you."

"Don't thry your game o' bluff wid me, me lad," responded the sergeant. "How long is it since ye parted from Mr. Roberts?"

"We parted from him this morning," said Eric.

"Ye're a liar," remarked the sergeant. "Ye parted from him four days ago, carrying off two of his horses—sure, don't I know the dapple grey that that chap is riding?" He pointed with his revolver to the horse on which I was mounted.

"Oh, this is past a joke," said Eric.

"These horses are Mr. Roberts'; he lent them to us—there's no concealment in the matter."

"Consalement! There's no consalement when we've grabbed ye. Be the powers, Mr. Sinclair was right, though he is a Scotchman. He said this 'ud be the first house ye'd attack if ye came this way, an' that's why he got the old shutthers put up before he left for Grafton. An' the ladies foired on yez! More power to thim! It was the sound o' the shots that brought us up."

"Take us up to the house, and if Mrs. Sinclair is there she'll make everything square," said Eric.

"It's not me that'll frighten the poor lady to death by the sight of threë bushrangers, though yiz 're only amachewers. Jones, me man, ye'll take the bridle af the boy on the dapple grey—he looks a spiritless chap, he'll not be too much for ye if ye keep your shooter handy. Brady, ye'll take charge af the other. It's Ellis and meself that'll keep by this voilint gentleman. For'ard."

In three seconds our bridles were seized and we were being forced away between the troopers with the oversized revolvers. We were silent, for Eric had exhausted himself early in the



"THE SERGEANT."

encounter, and had no reserve of language to fall back on. Chris and I were merely sullen. After a ride of forty miles through scrub, to be forced off like this was enough to make any one sullen.

Luckily the police-station was not more than a mile away. Had it been more distant, our horses, plucky and all as they were, would not have been equal to the journey.

"Look after those horses," said Eric, as we dismounted, rejecting, with chilling courtesy, the offers of assistance from three additional troopers, who came out of the station in the evening dress of the bush policeman.

"Don't fear but we'll look after thim and you as well," replied the sergeant, as we crowded into the building, and, at the suggestion of one of the men, into the strong room beyond.

"Man, Sergeant O'Brien, but you've done the trick this time, and no mistake!" were the congratulatory words that we heard the trooper who locked our door offer to his superior as he hastened to hear the story of our capture.

"We've nabbed thim sure, me lad," said the sergeant, cheerfully. "There's no mistake about thim. They're sorry amachewers, though they did attack Mr. Sinclair's house. I expect that the rough customer is the leader. Anyhow, one of the party was riding the dapple grey, and it's Mr. Roberts' horse."

"This is a pretty joke," said Chris. "Is this another sample of bush hospitality? How long did your friend keep the stranger that turned up one night? Was it six months or a year?"

"I don't see that verandah with the cane chairs and the magnum of the widow," I ventured to remark.

"With the Songs of Araby floating on the scented evening air," added Chris.

"Hang me if I know what to make of the whole business," said Eric.

"Didn't Mr. Roberts say something about having a couple of horses stolen by two fellows in his employment?" asked Chris.

"By Jingo, that's the heart of the mystery," cried Eric, after a pause. "That's what that idiot of an Irishman meant by his allusion to the horses. His 'information received' extended only to the horses."

"Anyhow, here we are for the night," said Chris. "The furnishing of this apartment leaves much to be desired."

"And I don't suppose that the supper that's waiting for us will be found to possess many *récherché* features," said I.

So tired were we that each of us fell asleep on



"'YER HONER'S JUST TOO LATE."

the boarded floor of the strong room. We were only awakened by the clatter of horses outside.

"Sergeant O'Brien," sang out a clear voice, "turn out your men without delay. The fellows have been trying to force an entrance to my house, but a couple of revolver shots sent them flying. If we're lively we'll capture them. There's a mob of about a dozen, my sister says."

"That's Jack Sinclair's voice," said Eric. "We're all right, lads."

"Ah, yer honer's just too late," came the voice of the sergeant. "Troth, sir, the three raskills is safe and sound beyant that door."

"What do you mean, man?"

"I mane, yer honer, that we heard the revolvers barking, and came upon yer mob of amachewer bushrangers red-handed."

"He's a liar, Jack," yelled out Eric.

"Boys, but he's a violent chap for an amachewer!" we heard the sergeant murmur. "I don't moind him calling me a loir, sir. He has been under my care for the last hour and has come to know me."

"Sinclair, will you kindly kick that Irish idiot until your boots give out, and then take the key from his pocket and release us?" shouted Eric.

"Who the blazes are you?" asked Sinclair, in by no means an undertone.

"I'm Eric Macray."

"And, by George, it's Eric Macray's voice," cried Sinclair. "By the powers, you've ruined your chances for life, O'Brien! You've arrested the Private Secretary to Sir Ebenezer—a greater man than Sir Ebenezer himself! Open that door if you mean to remain in the force."

We heard a faint gurgle, and knew that the sergeant was trying to speak. In another moment the door was open, and Eric walked out. We followed more slowly, feeling mean.

"This is my friend Lord Glaslough," said Eric, pointing to me; "and this is Mr. Chris Stafford. I was bringing them to your station for a week, but——"

"My dear Eric, was there ever such a blunder?" said Mr. Sinclair. "What will your friends think of our bush hospitality? You see, two of Roberts' men stole a couple of his horses and set up as bushrangers on a small scale. As I was compelled to go to Grafton with every available station-hand this morning, I thought it better to barricade the house and——"

"Yes, we know the rest," said Eric. "Where's that sergeant?"

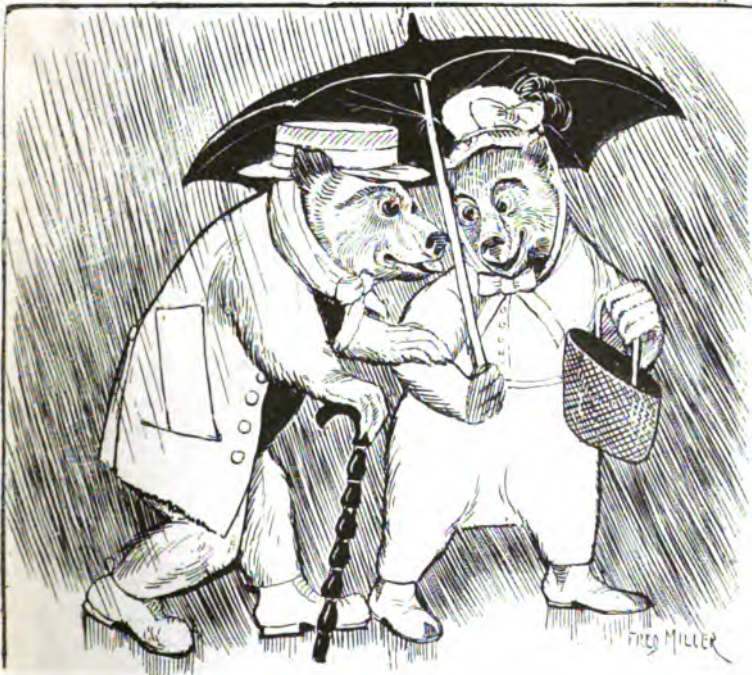
"Sir," said one of the troopers, saluting, "the sergeant's wife is unwell, and he's gone to her bedside. He bid me tell you, sir, that this is the seventh."

"What's the seventh?"

"The child, sir—the baby that's expected."

In half-an-hour we were congratulating Mrs. Sinclair upon her lack of skill with the revolver. We did so with glasses of Clicquot frothing and sparkling in the lamplight.

It was a good wine, and it needed no bush to enable us to appreciate it as it deserved.





"ARTISTS WERE REDUCED TO BORROWING HALF ROLLS FROM THEIR MODELS."

The Abolition of Money.

BY I. ZANGWILL.

ILLUSTRATED BY MAX COWPER AND HERBERT JOHNSON.

THE Cynic was very old and very wise and very unpopular. I was the only person at his "At Home" that afternoon. I gave him my views on Bi-metallism, having just read the leader in *The Times*. He yawned obtrusively, and growled, "Bi-metallism, indeed! The only remedy for modern civilisation is A-metallism. Money must be abolished. The root of all evil must be pulled up." "Money abolished!" I echoed in amaze. "Why, any student of political economy will tell you we could not live without it. Lacking a common measure of value, we——"

"So it has always been held by students when answering political economy papers," he interrupted impatiently. "Yet I dreamt once of a land where the currency was called in, and the morning stars sang together."

"But the exchange of commodities——" I began.

"Was effected by the sublime simplicity of barter. At one sweep were swept away all that monstrous credit system which had created an army of accountants and a Court of Bankruptcy; all that chaos of single and double-faced entry—all that sleight-of-hand abracadabra of signatures—all those paper phantoms of capital. The Stock Exchange and other gambling hells shrivelled up. There was a vast saving of clerical labour, and there were few loopholes for fraud. Everything was too simple. Swift retribution overtook the man who shirked his obligations to his fellows. Nobody could juggle with bits of paper at the North Pole and ruin people at the South. The windows of human Society were cleared of the gigantic complex cobweb full of dead flies. One could look inside and see what was going on. 'Gentlemen' could not flourish in the light. They were like the fungi that grew in cellars. Every man became both a worker and a trader."

"Not an unmixed gain, that," I protested.

"I grant you," said the Cynic. "Some of the finer shades of fine gentlemanliness were lost; the honourable feeling of cheating

one's tradesmen, the noble scorn of tailors, the lofty despal of duns. When all men were tradesmen, these higher class distinctions fused into one another. There arose a clannish feeling which prevented the tradesman from defrauding one of his own class. But there was an even graver evil to be placed to the debit side of the new system. For the professors of political economy (who had thrown up their posts as a conscientious protest against the abolition of money and of salaries) proved to be right. So clumsy was the mechanism of exchange that men were actually driven to doing more than one kind of work. All those advantages of specialisation which Adam Smith, supplemented by Babbage, had so laboriously pointed out were completely lost to a wasteful world. Rather than be without certain luxuries and necessities men gave up moving their legs all day up and down in time with iron treadles, or feeding machines with bits of material exactly alike, or remaining doubled up underground, or making marks from hour to hour and from year to year on pieces of ruled paper. The waste by friction became enormous. Some of the least thrifty even made their own furniture, and wove their own clothes, and carved out rude ornaments for themselves. Whether from a natural want of economy, or from an unwillingness to encounter the difficulties of traffic, or from a mere spirit of independence, these men deliberately reverted to the condition from which mankind had so painfully emerged.

"Some even pretended to enjoy it, and, rather paradoxically, asserted that the abolition of gold had brought about the golden age of primitive legend. Others who felt keenly the falling-off in production, and the absence of those huge stores of unsold commodities which glutted the ancient markets, and gave a nation a sense of wealth in the midst of poverty; the æsthetic spirits who lamented the disappearance of the ancient mansions and palaces, which, although they were empty three parts of the year, yet afforded men the consolation of knowing that they were ample enough to shelter the majority of the homeless—men of this stamp were chagrined by the cumbersome mechanism of exchange, which made these glories of the past impracticable, and they were for introducing counters. But counters, although they had the advantage of lacking intrinsic value, would be quite as bad as actual coins if men could entirely trust one another never to repudiate their obligations. Unfortunately Society had grown so honest under the new *régime* that this condition was

fulfilled, and the operation of counters would have been identical with that of money. Moreover, counters would have brought back card-playing, horse-racing, fire and life assurance, and other forms of gambling, which without them involved such complex calculations and valuations of loaves and fishes that all the pleasure was spoilt. When these things were pointed out to the æsthetic and the economical, they were convinced and remained of the same opinion.



THE POET WHO WENT ROUND AMONG THE WORKMEN TO CHAFFER VERSES."

"THE POET WHO WENT ROUND AMONG THE WORKMEN TO CHAFFER VERSES."

"But even with all these deficits the balance in favour of the *status quo* was eminently satisfactory. It was re-discovered that man really wanted very little here below, and that it was better for all to get it than for some to continue to want it; and, taking into account also the general freedom from war, newspapers, and other evils of a moneyed civilisation, it must be conceded that the common people had very little to grumble at."

"But what of the uncommon people?" I interrupted at last. "They must have been martyred."

"Certainly, for the good of the common people. You see, everything was topsy-turvy. Besides, they only suffered during the earlier stages of transition. There was, for instance, the poet who went round among the workmen to chaffer verses. But there were few willing to barter solid goods for poetry. Here and there an intelligent artisan in love purchased a serenade, and an occasional lunatic (for Nature hath her aberrations under any system) became the proprietor of an epic. But the sons of toil drove few bargains or hard with the sons of the Muses. The best poets fared worst, for the crowd sympathised not with their temper, nor with their diction, and they were like to die of starvation and so achieve speedy recognition. But the minor poets, too, were in sore strait. The market was exceedingly limited. Sellers were many and buyers few. Rondeaux were hawked about from butcher to baker, at ten to the joint or three to the four-pound loaf, and triolets were going at a hollow-toothful of brandy. A ballade-worth of butter would hardly cover a luncheon biscuit, while a five-act blank verse tragedy was given away for a pound of tea, and that only when the characters were incestuous and the *cæsuras* irreproachable.

"A famous female poet was reduced to pawning her best sonnet for a glass of lemonade and a bun.

"Times were no less hard for the comic writer. Hitherto he had only to outrage his mother-tongue, or to debase the moral currency, to find the land ready to accord him of the fat thereof. He used to sit in a room in Fleet Street and make or steal jokes in return for gold. By the wonderful mechanism of the old Society other men and women, in whatever part of the world he might stray, would rush to feed and clothe and house him, and play and sing and dance to him, and physic him, and drive him about in carriages, and tell him the news and shave him, and press upon him aromatic mixtures to smoke, and love him, and kowtow to him, and beg of him, and even laugh at his jokes, all in return for making or stealing jokes in Fleet Street. Some of these men and women would detest jokes, or have a blindness to their points; nevertheless, not one but would be eager to express in the most practical form his or her sense of the services rendered to society by the joker. But now that people saw with open eyes through the transparent mechanism of

exchange they were extremely loth to part with their tangible commodities in return for mere flashes of wit or vulgarity. Previously they had only half realised that they were soberly and seriously making coats, or working machines, or smelting iron, while these jesters were merely cudgelling their brains or consulting back files. The complexity of the thing had disguised the facts. But now that they saw exactly what was going on, they became sud-



"SOLD HER BEST SONNET FOR A BUN AND A BOTTLE OF LEMONADE."

denly callous to numerous vested interests, and their new-found desire to know why they should give up the fruits of their labour pressed very cruelly upon innocent individuals. The comic writer found it no joke to live with 'I'd Rajah not's' going at

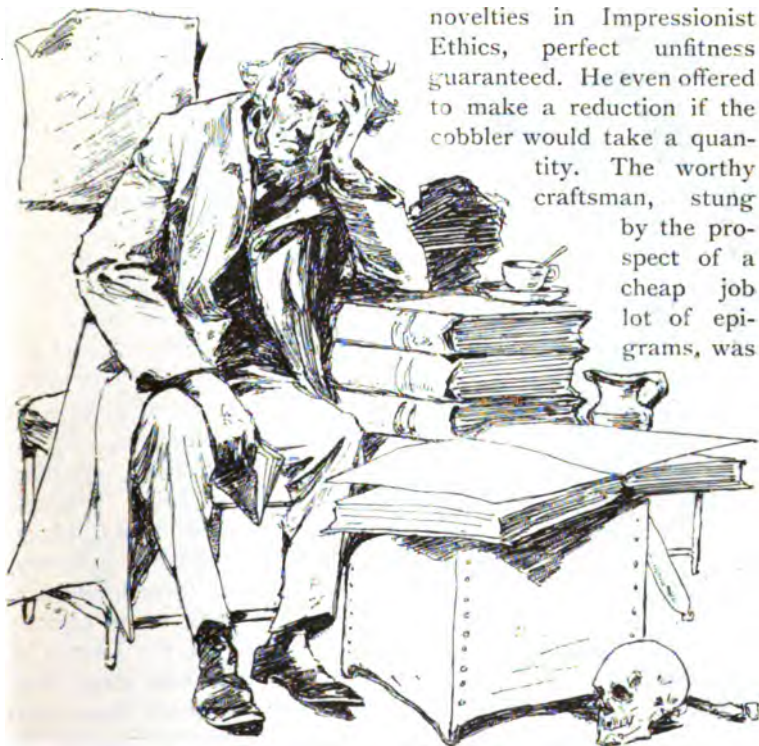
seventy-five to the cigarette or mockeries of the mother-in-law yielding but a ton of coals to the thousand. Puns were barely vendible, and even comic pictures could only be sold at a great sacrifice of decency.

"The heir was a type of sufferer. When he came around asking for champagne and chicken, the working-man said, 'What are you offering us in exchange?' and he replied, 'My relationship to my father.' But they would not buy.

"Antiquarians and scholars, too, found it a hard task to live. No one needed the things they raked up from the dust-heap of the past. Critics were in an exceptionally critical condition. No one cared to exchange his productions with a man who in return had only to offer his opinion of somebody else's! As this opinion was usually worthless even under the old *régime*, people soon began to turn up their noses at it, and nobody would give a rusk for the information that Turner was a better artist than Nature, or that hanging was too good for Whistler. Remarks about the Italian Renaissance were accounted paltry equivalents for green peas, invidious comparisons among the Lake poets were not easily negotiable for alpaca umbrellas, and the subtlest misreadings of Shakespeare were considered trivial substitutes for small-clothes. The artists were reduced to borrowing half-rolls from their models, partly because people had gone back to Nature and liked their scenery free from oil, and drank in the Spirit of Beauty without water, and partly because it was so difficult to assess the value of a picture now that critics had been starved out and speculation had died away. Allegorical painters continued a much-misunderstood race, and the fusion of classes had re-acted fatally on the brisk trade in 'Portraits of a Gentleman.' People who, in their celestial aspirations after the True, the Good, and the Beautiful, had forgotten that they ate and drank and required food, warmth, and shelter to hatch all these sublime things with Capital Letters—people who had heretofore poured lofty scorn on those who could not forget that man was a being with a body—these were now the most clamant demanders of the material. Only by the withdrawal of physical necessities and luxuries did they come to realise how much they had depended on such or to perceive the impossibility of the Worship of Truth on an empty stomach. Alas! under this crude system of barter the most ardent expression of their sentiments concerning the ideal and the *Kalokagathon* would not keep them in cigars.

The professional paradoxist went about with holes in his boots. Epigrams in hand, sickness at heart, and emptiness at stomach, he crawled through the town in search of a buyer. He offered a dozen of the choicest apothegms for a pair of hob-nailed boots, conjuring the cobbler like the veriest 'commercial' to note the superiority of the manufacture. He pointed out that

he travelled with the latest novelties in Impressionist Ethics, perfect unfitness guaranteed. He even offered to make a reduction if the cobbler would take a quantity. The worthy craftsman, stung by the prospect of a cheap job lot of epigrams, was



MAKOWITZ

"FOUND IT A HARD TASK TO LIVE."

prevailed upon to look at the goods. But when he read that 'Vice is the foundation of all virtue,' that 'Self-sacrifice is the quintessence of selfishness,' and that 'The Good of Evil outweighs the Evil of Good,' he felt that he could do much better with his boots, even if he only employed them to kick the epigrammatist. The poor wretch thought himself lucky when he succeeded in purchasing two epigramsworth of tobacco and

a paradoxworth of potatoes. To cap his misfortunes, the nation suffered from a sudden invasion of immigrant epigrammatists, so that cynicisms went a-begging at ten for a sausage-roll. Nor was the dull but moral maxim at less discount than the witty but improper epigram. Essays inculcating the most superior virtues failed to counterbalance a day's charing, and



MAXWELL

"THE PROFESSIONAL PARADOXIST WENT ABOUT
WITH HOLES IN HIS BOOTS."

the finest spiritualistic soft soap would not wash clothes. Even the washerwoman deemed her work more real and valuable than the manufacture of moralities too fine for use, and the deliberate effusion of sentiments too good to be true. In those days, too, a complete political platform, comprising a score of first-class articles of faith, sold at a pair of second-hand slop-trousers, and a speech of three hours and three hundred parentheses could not fetch more than a pot of jam in the open market. The workhouses were crowded with politicians, critics, poets, novelists, bishops, sporting tipsters, scholars, heirs, soldiers, dudes, painters, journalists, peers, bookmakers, landlords, punsters, idealists, and other incorrigible persons. Nothing was more curious and heartrending in the history of this transition to a new stage than the rapidity with which those who had been most exigent towards life bated their terms. Men who, in their aspirations after the Good and the Beautiful and the True,

had unwittingly wasted an intolerable deal of the world's substance in riotous idealising; men who had so long breathed the atmosphere of ottomans and rose-leaves that they were barely conscious of their privileges, now found themselves clamouring for bread wherewith to stay the cravings of their inner selves, and accounted themselves happy if they found a roof to shelter them. The pathos of it was that they felt it all

too intensely to see the pathos of it or to express it in poem, picture, or song.

"It was, of course, the current political economy to which was due this immense depreciation in the exchange value of the higher kinds of intellectual and artistic work. In the old Socialistic system which had been swept away by the abolition of money, men had purchased literary and musical commodities in common, each consumer paying his quota for his share of an unconsumable and infinitely divisible whole. But now few individuals cared or could afford to purchase whole works for their private edification ; and so it came to pass that men of talent suffered as much as men of genius in the olden days. And when it began to be understood of the people that the times were other, and that Art and Letters and Apostleship would not pay, men turned in resignation to work with their hands, and they made all kinds of useful things.

"And the bookmakers returned not to their pens, nor the pot-boiling painters to their palettes, nor the apostles to their prophesying, being otherwise engaged and not thereto driven by inward necessity.

"And the Society of Authors perished !

"But the great poets, and the prophets, and the workers in colour and form, upon whom the spirit rested, these wrought on when their daily labour for a livelihood was at an end, for joy of their art and for the religious fire that was in them, giving freely of their best to their fellow-men, and exempt for evermore from all taint of trade."

The Cynic paused and I sat silent, deeply impressed by what he had said, and striving to imprint every word of it upon my memory so that I might sell it to a magazine.





"A LONG ARM WAVED A GREETING AT THEM."

At Point o' Bugles.

BY GILBERT PARKER.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY STANLEY L. WOOD.

"*JOHN YORK, John York, where art thou gone, John York?*"

"What's that, Pierre?" said Sir Duke Lawless, starting to his feet and peering round.

"Hush!" was Pierre's reply. "Wait for the rest. . . . There!"

"*King of my heart, King of my heart, I am out on the trail of thy bugles.*"

There was another pause, Sir Duke was about to speak, but Pierre lifted a hand in warning, and then through the still night there came the long cry of a bugle, rising, falling, strangely clear, echoing and echoing again, and dying away. A moment, and the call was repeated, with the same effect, and again a third time, then all was still, save for the flight of birds roused from the desire of night and the long breath of some animal in the woods sinking back to sleep.

Pierre piled some logs on the fire and turned so that his back caught the heat and his face the reflected light. Sir Duke fitted his shoulders into the hollow of a log, and, with his look given to the distance, waited till Pierre should tell his story.

Their camp was pitched on the south shore of Hudson's Bay, many leagues to the west of Rupert House, not far from the Moose river. Looking north was the wide expanse of the bay dotted with sterile islands here and there, to the east were the barren steppes of Labrador, and all round them the calm, incisive air of a late September, when winter begins to shake out his frosty curtains and hang them on the cornice of the north, despite the high protests of the sun. They two had come together after years of separation, and Sir Duke had urged Pierre to fare away with him to Hudson's Bay, which he had never seen, although he had shares in the great Company, left him by his uncle, Admiral Sir Clavel Lawless. They had

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journeyed easily north and east, had spent weeks at Rupert House, and were now on the way to Fort Albany, where Lawless was to leave Pierre and go to England in the Hudson's Bay ship, which came and went yearly, bringing news out of the world to the north, and carrying out of the north many of its products and some of the great secrets of life. Pierre, who had never seen the vaster world over "the sloppy drink," as he called the Atlantic, still had that knowledge of life's real values which made him measure things as only he can who has no prejudices, has never tied himself to any cause, has known as much evil as good, has lived mostly alone, read little and thought a deal, and found, when all was done, that the things to be said about life might be counted on the fingers once round.

They were camped in a hollow, to the right a clump of hardy trees, with no great deal of foliage, but some stoutness; to the left a long finger of land running out into the water like a wedge, the most eastern point of the western shore of Hudson's Bay. It was high and bold, and, somehow, had a fine dignity and beauty. One could imagine someone always standing sentinel there, or some hermit coming ever and anon to its farthest brow, and facing the white silent east, thinking of the garden of pomegranates, the milk and honey, the golden apples in ripe orchards, the yellow roses in fair gardens, the bowers in which he should never rest again; summoning his soul to dwell in the better joy of this air blowing down from the Pole; this deep mystical north with its camp of the delightful fires; learning that the smell of the pine and cypress and cedar is sweeter than the musky woods of the summer worlds; that the cry of the silver heron is fine as the skylark's song rising from island meadows; that the white tusks of the narwhal make richer ornaments than Parian marble; and that the bread of corn ground between two stones, with shreds of deer's meat, is richer in the mouth, alone with the dreams that come from the Lodges of the Wise, than banquets in the halls of a king.

If you had gone to the farthest point of the rocky wedge, you would have seen that a spot on the stone was worn smooth, and that a faint path was trodden to it from the plains behind. If you had eyes like an Indian's you would also have seen that the path led away north to a great log-house called King's House, where traders of the Company lived, gathering furs to send away to Fort Albany for England, and distributing to the

other ports, south ~~and~~ west, the yearly supplies which came by the Company's ship.

Lawless noticed that Pierre ~~seemed~~ to be listening intently, though his attitude was so careless. He ~~kept~~ silence, waiting like any true adventurer,—every man is that who is fit to live in the good north—and his patience had its reward. He ~~saw~~ Pierre half rise and turn his head, as though he had heard a sound, as was the case. Presently he too heard it—the soft crash of crisp grass under the feet. He raised himself to a sitting posture and waited. The step was human, he knew that, and it was a month since he and Pierre had heard any footsteps of man save their own. It is not true that men love each other better where there are few to love, because there are few and the heart is hungry. But it is true that men, in lonely places, where nature has had its way with them and cleared their souls of rubbish, know each other better in a day than they do in London town in a year. A footstep on the clear air of night, in the hushed loneliness of the north, raises in a man's mind tremendous questioning. One half hour beside the fire and the cooking-pot decides the grave question—are we comrades or strangers for ever? You cannot pull the same blanket over you both, and tear apart the same strip of buffalo meat, if, having read each other by the light of the Great Fires, you find the plague-spot of the alien nature.

Lawless, therefore, had a moment of strange suspense, Pierre one of deep curiosity; for he guessed instantly that the stranger was the lonely bugler from the wedge of rock outlined against the cold sky.

Presently a tall figure came out of the dusk into the light of their fire, and a long arm waved a greeting at them. Both Lawless and Pierre rose to their feet. The stranger was dressed in buckskin, he carried a rifle, and around his shoulder was a strong yellow cord, to which hung a bugle.

"*How!*" said the stranger with a nod, and drew near the fire, stretching out his hands to the blaze.

"*How!*" said Lawless and Pierre, looking him up and down, and studying his face. There was no speech for a moment, and no awkwardness, for hosts and stranger were bent on the same task, and Pierre's eyes were not keener on the stranger than his on Pierre and Lawless.

After a moment Lawless drew from his blanket a flask of brandy, and still without a word handed it over the fire. The



"THE FINGERS OF THE TWO MEN MET."

fingers of the two men met in the flicker of flames, a sort of bond by fire, and the stranger raised the flask.

"*Chin-chin*," he said, and drank, breathing a long sigh of satisfaction afterwards as he handed it back; but it was Pierre that took it, and again fingers touched in the bond of fire. Pierre passed the flask to Lawless, who lifted it.

"*Chin-chin*," he said, drank, and gave the flask to Pierre again, who did as did the others, and said, "*Chin-chin*," also.

Thus by the greetings "*How*" and "*Chin-chin*" were the far north and the far south, the far west and the far east united, and by that salutation of the east, given in the far north, Lawless knew that he had met one who had lighted fires where men are many and close to the mile as holes in a sieve.

Then they all sat down and tobacco went round, the stranger offering his, which the two others, with true hospitality, accepted.

"We heard you over there—it was you?" said Lawless, nodding towards Point o' Bugles, and glancing at the bugle the other carried.

"Yes, it was me," was the reply. "Someone always does it twice a year, on the 25th September and the 25th March. I've done it now without a break for ten years, until it has got to be a sort of religion with me, and the whole thing's as real as if King George and John York were talking—I, John York. And as I tramp to the Point or swing away back, in summer barefooted, in winter on my snowshoes, I seem to myself to be John York on the trail of the King's bugles. I've thought so much about the whole thing, I've read so many of John York's letters—and how many times one of the King's!—that now I scarcely know which is the bare story, and which the bits I've dreamed as I've tramped over the plains or sat in the quiet at King's House, spelling out little by little the man's life, from the cues which I found in his journal, in the Company's papers, and in that one letter of the King's."

Pierre's eyes were now more keen than those of Lawless. For years he had known vaguely of this legend of Point o' Bugles, but he had never been satisfied with what he knew, feeling sure that there was much more to be told. He knew more legends than any man in the north, and had prized them more than any, giving them only to such as Tybalt, the tale-

gatherer, who told them again in writing, as he held tales never should be told.

"You know it all," he said; "begin at the beginning—how and when you first heard, how you got the real story, and never mind which is taken from the papers and which from your own mind—if it all fits in, it is all true, for the lie never fits in right with the square truth. If you have the footprints and the handprints, you can tell the whole man; if you have the horns of a deer you know it as if you had killed it, skinned it, and potted it."

The stranger stretched himself before the fire, nodding at his hosts as he did so, and then began :

"Well, a word about myself first," he said, "so you'll know just where you are. I was full of life in London town and India, and that's a fact. I'd plenty of friends and little money, and my will wasn't equal to the task of keeping out of the hands of the Jews. I didn't know what to do, but I had to go somewhere, that was clear. Where? An accident decided it. I came across an old journal of my great grandfather, John York,—my name's Dick Adderley—and just as if a chain had been put round my leg, and I'd been jerked over by the tipping of the world, I had to come to Hudson's Bay. John York's journal was a thing to sit up nights to read. It came back to England after he'd had his fill of Hudson's Bay and the earth beneath, and had gone, as he said himself on the last page of the journal, to follow the King's buglers in 'the Land that is far off.' God *and* the devil were strong in old John York. I didn't lose much time after I'd read the journal. I went to Hudson's Bay House in London, got a place in the Company, by the help of the chief shareholder, the Governor himself, and came out. I've learned the rest of the history of old John York, the part that never got to England; for here at King's House, there's a holy tradition that the real John York belongs to it and to it alone, and has no concern for the rest of the world."

Then Adderley laughed a little. "Pride is pride the world over," he added, "and I suppose when the earth was young, and families lived a thousand miles apart, the family history was put away with lavender and the family plate just as now. Anyhow, King's House guards John York's memory and life, and it's as fresh and real here now as if he'd died yesterday, though it's forgotten in England, and by most who bear his name, and the present Prince of Wales maybe never heard

of the man who was the dearest friend of the Prince Regent, the First Gentleman of Europe."

"That sounds sweet gossip," said Lawless, with a smile, "we are waiting."

The other took up the thread. "John York was an honest



"TO-NIGHT AT SEVEN."

man, of wholesome sport, jovial and never shirking with the wine, commendable in his appetite, of rollicking soul and proud temper, and a gay dog altogether—gay, but to be trusted too, for he had a royal heart. In the coltish days of the Prince Regent he was a boon comrade, but never did he stoop to flattery, nor would he hedge when truth should

be spoken, as oftentimes it was with the royal blade, for he had saucy notions of his place, and would at times forget a prince was but a man, topped with the accident of a crown. Never prince had truer friend, and so in his best hours he thought himself, and if he ever was just and showed his better part, it was to the bold country gentleman who never minced praise or blame, but said his say, and devil take the end of it. In truth the Prince was wilful, and once he did a thing which might have given a twist to the fate of England. Hot for the love of women, and with some dash of real romance in him too,—else even as a prince he might have had shallower love and service—he called John York one day and said: ‘To-night at seven, Squire John, you’ll stand with me while I put the seal on the Gates of Eden’; and when the other did not guess his import, added: ‘Sir Mark Selby is your neighbour—his daughter’s for my arms to-night. You know her, handsome Sally Selby—she’s for your Prince, for good or ill.’

“John York could scarcely understand at first, for he could not think the Prince had anything in mind but some hot escapade of love. When Mistress Selby’s name was mentioned his heart stood still, for she had been his choice, the dear apple of his eye since she had bloomed towards womanhood. He had set all his hopes upon her, tarrying till she should have seen some little life before he asked her for his wife. He had her father’s God-speed to his wooing, for he was a man whom all men knew honest and generous as the sun, and only cholerical with the mean thing. She, also, had given him good cause to think that he should one day take her to his home, a loved and honoured wife. His impulse, when her name passed the Prince’s lips, was to draw his sword, for he would have called an emperor to account; but presently he saw the real meaning of the speech: that the Prince would marry her that night.”

Here the story-teller paused again, and Pierre said softly, inquiringly:

“You began to speak in your own way, and you’ve come to another—like going from an almanac to the Mass.”

The other smiled. “That’s so. I’ve heard it told by old Shearton at King’s House, who speaks as if he’d stepped out of Shakespeare, and somehow I seem to hear him talking, and I tell it as he told it last year to the Governor of the Company. Besides, I’ve listened these seven years to his style.”

"It's a strange beginning—unwritten history of England," said Sir Duke, musingly.

"You shall hear stranger things yet," answered Adderley. "John York could hardly believe it at first, for the thought of such a thing never had place in his mind. Besides, the Prince knew how he had looked upon the lady, and he could not have thought his comrade would come in between him and his happiness. Perhaps it was the difficulty, adding spice to the affair, that sent the Prince to the appeal of private marriage to win the lady, and John York always held that he loved her truly then, the first and only real affection of his life. The lady—who can tell what won her over from the honest gentleman to the faithless Prince? That soul of vanity which wraps about the real soul of every woman, fell down at last before the highest office in the land and the gifted bearer of the office. But the noble spirit in her brought him to offer marriage, when he might otherwise have offered—a barony. There is a record of that and more in John York's memoirs which I will tell you, for they have settled in my mind like an old song, and I learned them long ago. I give you his own words :

" 'I did not think when I beheld thee last, dearest flower of the world's garden, that I should see thee bloom in that wide field, rank with the sorrows of royal favour. How did my foolish eyes fill with tears when I watched thee, all rose and gold in thy cheeks and hair, the light falling on thee through the chapel window, putting thy pure palm into my Prince's, swearing thy life away, selling the very blossoms of earth's orchards for the brier beauty of a hidden vineyard ! I saw the flying glories of thy cheeks, the halcyon weather of thy smile, the delicate liting of thy bosom, the dear gaiety of thy step, and, oh, that moment, I mourned for thy sake that thou wert not the dullest wench in the land, for then thou had'st been spared thy miseries, thou had'st been saved the torture-boot of a lost love and a disacknowledged wifedom. And yet I could not hide from me that thou wert happy at that great moment, when he swore to love and cherish thee, till death ye parted. Ah, George, my prince, my king, how wickedly thou didst break thy vows with both of us who loved thee well, loved thee through good and ill report—for they spake evil of thee, George, ay, the meanest of thy subjects spake lightly of their King—when with that sweet soul secretly hid away in the farthest corner of thy kingdom, thou sought'st divorce from thy later Caroline, whom thou,

unfaithful, did'st charge with infidelity. When, at last, thou did'st turn again to the partner of thy youth, thy true wife in the eyes of God, it was too late. Ah, George, did'st thou not call to mind the perfect goodness of that dear soul, that burst her heart for thee, whom thou did'st call thy queen of queens, while she, when she had fastened her heart to thee in the valley of love, wished thee only to call her your Sally, and be staunch to her? Did I not make thee promise, ay, *make* thee promise, George, that though thou could'st not take to share thy throne this dear maid of no lineage, thou should'st never take another wife, never put our dear heart away, though she could not—after our miserable laws—bear thee princes? And thou did'st promise, and thou did'st break thy promise, yet she forgave thee, and I forgave thee, for well we knew that thou would'st pay a heavy reckoning, and that in the hour when thou should'st cry to us, we might not come to thee; that in the days when age and sorrow and vast troubles should oppress thee, thou would'st long for the true and honest hearts who loved thee for thyself and not for aught thou could'st give or aught that thou wert, save as a man. And it was so, ay, it was so. When thou did'st swear to take Caroline to wife I pleaded with thee, I was wroth with thee. Thy one plea was succession. Succession! Succession! What were a hundred dynasties beside that precious life, eaten by shame and sorrow! It were easy for others, not thy children, to come after thee, to rule as well as thee, as must even now be the case, for thou hast no lawful child save that one in the loneliest corner of thy English vineyard—alack! alack! On that day I begged thee, warned thee, George, and thou did'st drive me out with words ill-suited to thy friend who loved thee.

“I did not fear thee, I would have forced thee to thy knees or made thee fight me, had not some good spirit cried to my heart that thou wert her husband, and that we both had loved thee. I dared not listen to the brutal thing thou hinted'st at—that now I might fatten where I had hungered. Thou had'st to answer for the baseness of that thought to the King of Kings, George, when thou wentest forth—alone, no subject, courtier, friend, wife, or child to do thee service, journeying—not *en prince*, George, no, not *en prince*! but as a naked soul to God. Thou said'st to me: “Get thee gone, John York, where I shall no more see thee.” And when I returned: “Would'st thou have me leave thy country, sir?” thou answered'st, “Blow

thy quarrelsome soul to the stars where my farthest bugle cries." Then I said: "I go, sir, till thou callest me again—and after; but not till thou hast honoured the child of thy honest wedlock; till thou hast secured thy wife to the end of her life against all manner of trouble save the shame of thy disloyalty." There was no more for me to do, for my deep love itself forbade my



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"GET THEE GONE, JOHN YORK."

staying longer within reach of the noble deserted soul. And so I saw the chastened glory of her face no more, nor nevermore beheld her perfectness."

Adderley paused once more, and, after refilling his pipe in silence, continued—

"That was the heart of the thing. His soul sickened of the rank world, as he called it, and he came out to the Hudson's

Bay country, leaving his estates in care of his nephew, but taking many stores and great chests of clothes and a ship load of furniture, instruments of music, more than a thousand books, some good pictures, and great stores of wine. And here he came and stayed, an officer of the Company, building King's House, and filling it with all the fine things he had brought with him, making in this far north a little palace in the wilderness.

And here he lived, his

great heart growing greater in this wide sinewy world, King's House a place of pilgrimage for all the Company's men in the north; a noble gentleman in a sweet exile, loving what he could no more, what he did no more see.



“ ‘ THAT WAS THE HEART OF THE THING.’ ”

Twice a year he went to that point yonder, and blew this bugle, no man knew why or wherefore, year in year out till 1817. Then there came a letter to him with great seals, which began—*‘ John York, John York, where hast thou gone, John York?’* And there followed a score of sorrowful sentences, full of petulance too, for it was as John York foretold, his Prince longed for the true souls whom he had cast off. But he called too late, for the neglected wife died from the shock of his longing message

to her, and when, by the same mail, John York knew that, he would not go back to England to the King. But twice every year he went to yonder point, and spoke out the King's words to him: '*John York, John York, where art thou gone, John York?*' and gave the words of his own letter in reply: '*King of my heart, King of my heart, I am out on the trail of thy bugles.*' To this he added three calls of the bugle, as you have heard."

With this Adderley handed the bugle to Lawless, who looked at it with deep interest, and passed it on to Pierre.

"When he died," Adderley added, "he left the house, the fittings, and the stores to the officers of the Company who should be stationed there, with a sum of money yearly, provided that twice in twelve months the bugle should be blown as you have heard it, and those words called out."

"Why did he do that?" asked Lawless, nodding towards the Point.

Pierre answered this. "Why do they swing the censers at the Mass?" he said. "Man has signs for memories, and one man seeing another's sign will remember his own."

Lawless smiled gravely, and presently said to Adderley: "You stay because you like it—at King's House?"

The other stretched himself lazily to the fire and, "I am at home," he said. "I have no cares. I had all there was of that other world; I've not had enough of this. You'll come with me to King's House to-morrow?" he added.

To their quick assent he rejoined: "You'll never want to leave. You'll stay on."

To this Lawless replied, shaking his head: "I have a wife and child in England."

But Pierre did not reply. He lifted the bugle, mutely asking a question of Adderley, who as mutely replied, and then with it in his hand, left the other two beside the fire.

A few minutes later they heard, with three calls of the bugle from the Point afterwards, Pierre's voice:

"*John York, John York, where hast thou gone, John York?*" and the reply:

"*King of my heart, King of my heart, I am out on the trail of thy bugles.*"



"ALONG THE HIGHWAY."

Hawk's Den.

BY ANGUS EVAN ABBOTT.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE L. HARRISON.

THIS June evening when the sun had set, and the sky, a great dome of silver light, darkened to amber and purple in the east, Bulstrode, mounted on his trusty mare, rode among the gorse, his back to the Raven Inn. Not a breath stirred, and, as the highwayman passed, from the topmost twigs the robins lifted their tiny faces to the sky and piped an overture of welcome to the night. Small wonder then that Bulstrode rode with wistful face, and, in unison with his surroundings, communed with his soul. He was, in truth, at peace with the world and himself, as a man must be who seeks, as Bulstrode sought to-night, an honest living. For he and the men who rode so silently behind him were bound to a distant quarter of the downs to waylay a rich publican, one Josiah Krail, to pass on the coach that night. Bulstrode glanced at the sprig of Nancy Pretty that bedecked his cloak, he felt the cool and balm of evening on his brow, and could not help but say to himself over and over again that all goes well with the righteous.

Bulstrode had laid his plans with more than usual care for this job, and Stevers and McWhinney were sent to take passage on the coach to act as friends within the enemies' gate.

"Ye'll keep on your shoulders clear heads and close heads," were the leader's parting instructions. "Wag neither elbow nor tongue, and so keep your bodies from the catchpoles, and your necks from the hemp."

"Count the stars and whistle," flippantly remarked McWhinney. Being young and in need of it, he was impatient of advice.

"Ye'll pass on your road a when o' your kind counting the stars, the wind whistlin' atween their teeth and through their bleaching bones."

McWhinney laughed, and cast his head back as a young man does who knows most things.

"We're to say our prayers night and morn, and not to sleep on our backs," he laughed.

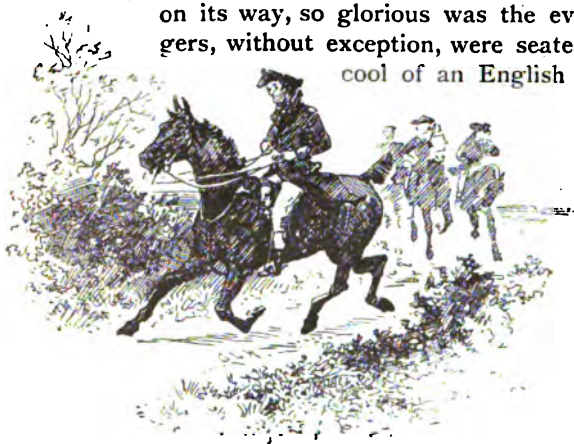
"I ha' known the time that a well-said prayer did no great harm, at least to them that were within earshot o' the same. What ill it did or did not to them that were no' intended to hear, is neither here nor there."

Stevens wanted to get away as soon as possible. He had not seen the lights of London for quite three months, and hungered for a sight of them again. Speaking to Bulstrode, he said :

"It is clearly understood that there are to be no bullets in your pistols. We are more anxious to stop the coach than one of your stray shots, you know."

"We will ha' no bullets, and but fire a shot or two to put the coach folks in proper fettle to passing their treasures wi' thanks to us for taking charge o' them. Now off ye go, and good luck go wi' ye."

When the coach with Stevens and McWhinney aboard swung on its way, so glorious was the evening that the passengers, without exception, were seated outside to enjoy the cool of an English gloaming. Along the



"10 WAYLAY ONE JOSIAH KRAIL."

highway with crackling of whip and jingle of harness, and much wayward plunging of fresh-yoked horses, the coach rattled and swayed ; past red cottages, from whose walls white roses nodded and swung, and by whose door-cheeks sat old women with faces as calm as this calm evening, and

fingers plying the knitting ; down into hollows, where the rabbit, with a burst of timid audacity, dashed across the way, and by the groves where the squirrel frisked his tail and scolded as he clung head down to the smooth bark of a beech ; and on, and on, and on, at every turn of the wheel drawing nearer to the great heath across which Bulstrode was so quietly making his way. The air was full of tinkling sounds and secret perfume. The very hawk perched on the withered branch, the topmost point of the tallest tree, even she sat a blotch of grey against the blue sky, and seemed to dream.

It was therefore with something of relief that Stevens, when he had run his eye over his fellow voyagers, saw at once that Josiah Krail for some reason had not taken the coach, and that

all their plans were to come to nothing. Very likely he had thought better of the matter and decided to take a less dangerous, if more circuitous, route to his new-old home. Josiah Krail had judged well, and once more showed the prudence that had been his characteristic all his days.

But after a second glance, Stevers, the rogue, saw that all was not lost. For, before him, her knees almost touching his, sat a buxom wench, rosy of cheek, and with roguish dancing eye. All thoughts of Josiah Krail, publican, flew to the four winds of heaven as Stevers looked into the face of the girl. And he saw? A lass plump and pretty, with the glow of robust health, of roast beef and sound honest ale, and plenty of it; a strapping lass, two-and-twenty, or may be more, and she looked at Stevers and dropped her eyes blushing, and looked again. Stevers cocked his hat and brushed his cloak aside, that she might see the gold-mounted hilt of the sword that hung by his side. Her kerchief was knotted loosely about her throat showing a pretty neck and a spear-head of snowy bosom, her lips were red, and her teeth regular and like ivory. Pretty, with all the prettiness of a healthy English girl. The only blemish, if blemish it were that did not disfigure but only accentuated her thousand charms, was a delicate scar on one temple, over which a tantalizing loop of golden hair was fashioned to be blown aside by every breeze. Stevers swore that this girl suited his ideas better than any stuffy publican with money-bags could. Hang it all, the coach had not gone half a mile before Stevers managed to tread on her toes, or do something else to attract her attention and form a pleasing introduction.

But the girl was not alone. By her side sat an old woman, and farther on another wench, pale of face and with thin, determined lips, to whom McWhinney was already paying his attentions, which, as it seemed to Stevers, were but coldly received. But she does not count. Stevers passed the time of day to his rosy girl and, receiving a civil reply, expressed his gladness that the coach route lay through such an interesting country, and a country he knew so well. She was a stranger comparatively, having, she said, only once passed over the route, and that on a rainy day, when she was forced to ride inside the coach. Stevers hoped he could show her some points of interest, and the better to locate the exact spot he took the vacant seat by her side. The highwayman chatted on, telling tales of the countryside, and when he told the girl the story of the High-

wayman's Mother, and she drew closer and closer to him, he knew that he had made a conquest.

"There's where she lived, Old Mother Weers, the 'wayman's mother, of whom no doubt you have heard," he said, pointing to a wood to the left.

"No, indeed, sir," she answered.

"I had thought 'twas known the length and breadth of the land," he continued, as one hungering to tell a tale. "They hanget her son, she was a widow for years, and he was her only child, and they hanget him. It seems, poor body, she sat the night through under the gallows tree, rocking herself forward and back, crying the first half o' the night, and singing as the sun rose; and the second night she sat there singing, indeed,



"SWUNG ON ITS WAY."

all through the night; and the next day they took her son down for very shame and buried him. And from that day to the day of her death, when anyone was hanget, she took her seat in the grass aneath the poor fellow and sang the weird night through. 'My bonny boy; my bonny boy!' were the only words she used, as she rocked to and fro; and they called that the 'wayman's dirge and her the 'wayman's mother. They'd ha' burned her for a witch had they dared, but when they caught her the highwaymen sent word that should she be so much as ducked, there would be a throat agape in every family in the district. They 'leased her then, and none molested her to the end o' her days, and they found her sitting dead aneath a gallows, covered with sleet that was no whiter than her hair. It was a sore blow to

the 'waymen, for they looked to their mother to see them through their first long night on the tree."

"Poor old woman, poor old woman," sighed the girl, with tears in her eyes, and then she said the story frightened her. So Stevers changed the key, and told her uproarious tales of tippled hoyden and tousled maid, and she told him a little of herself and her grandmother—the old woman who sat beside her, veiled and lightly muffled against the dew of evening. He asked her name, but, implore as he might, she would not discover it to him, no, nor the precise place of her residence.

"Oh, botheration, this is not fair play," Stevers declared. "As to the name, I'll just give you my favourite. The name that takes my fancy. Molly. Yes, Molly. A good, comfortable, huggable name I call it, much better than your Phillis's or Phillida's, although Phillida's not so bad. But hang me in chains if they beat Molly."

The girl, hugely diverted, laughed a merry peal, throwing up her hands in her mirth.

"'Tis my own name, my very baptized name. You knew 'twas so. 'Twas no guess, don't tell me. Someone's told ye."

"On my soul! On my honour! 'twas a guess," he continued, "and I'll find where they cage you, I'll warrant, if I have to cry Molly! Molly! up and down the length and breadth of the land the rest o' my days."

She took a sprig of the flower they still call thereabouts "Fools' Parsley," and, fastening it to his cloak, said:—

"When ye place that in my hands, when ye find me out, then ye may——" she stopped and looked archly at Stevers.

"I will take one now on trust," and he tried, before all present, to kiss her. But the lass would not hear of it.

"No, no, no, no. 'Twill be time enough when ye show that you deserve it," she said, and pushed him away, while the coach folk laughed to see two young people getting on so bravely.

The next stopping-place was the last on the London side of the great heath. This reached, and while waiting for a change of horses, Stevers drew McWhinney aside.

"I have something to propose to you, McWhinney," he began, but McWhinney cut him short.

"And I ha' something to propose to you, and that is that ye rest content wi' your red-faced quean, and keep your een off my lass."

"Off your lass. Off your lass," hotly rejoined Stevers. "She's not such a fine sight that I need waste two glances at her."

"Fine sight or no, you've been jabbering your 'wayman's grandmother fiddlesticks to your one, and all the time your een has been fixed on my one, I tell ye. I was watching ye the time ye little thought. A crow can filch as well's a miller and fly forby."

"A crow? A goose, you mean. Hang me in chains, McWhinney, but you're rich. That thin-lipped, pale-faced, angular jade. Gad, she wouldn't make a good conditioned ghost. You're crazy."

"Daft, is it? I'll see a cow fly with the next man."

"Well, you've seen a cow fly this time. You can keep the shrew for all of me, and gad, if it pleases you, you can take the fat grandmother too, and welcome. I want neither. If I did I could have one or the other for the asking."

"I'm not so sure," stubbornly replied McWhinney.

"Very well, I'm not going to ask. What I wanted to say to you is this. Josiah Krail is not on the coach, nor is there one guinea to jingle against another among all the passengers, unless it be my lass has 'em."

"Mine has as many as yours, that I'll swear."

"'Twould be a pity had she not, for she can ill spare the charms of money. But that is not the point. The man we seek is not here. Now I propose we make a stand against Bulstrode and all. They have no bullets in their pistols, and we can shoot over their heads and so will do them no injury. Between you and me, McWhinney, I think here's our chance to captivate the hearts of the two girls—and the grandmother if she turns out to be rich. You'll see our fellow-passengers hiding under the seats and crying for their lives while we bear the brunt of the storm. Nothing captivates women like bravery, and knowing what we know we can afford to be brave this time. They'll look upon us as their very preservers. Eh, McWhinney? What say you to the plan?" and Stevers gleefully dug his companion in the ribs.

McWhinney contemplatively rubbed his chin up and down with the hollow of his palm, his look of gloom gradually giving way to a broadened grin.

"Man, but ye're a wag, Stevers," was his only answer.

Fresh horses in, the coach was away again at a rattling pace, and after a few minutes' run, it spun upon the billowy common,

the domain of the Raven Inn. Five miles ahead lay Bulstrode and Nockold, Gosnell, Dug Gillies, and Rube Haybittle, waiting for the coach. It was dark along the surface of the heath, and the darkness, it seemed, rose to the level of the top of the coach, but overhead the night was clear and the sky spangled with stars. Not at all a night to fear waylaying, for highwaymen love a black night and a storm. So the horn rang merrily as the four good horses sprang out among the gorse and bracken, and the whip cracked like the fingers of a defiant man under the very nose, one might say, of Bulstrode. And Bulstrode, honest man, his duty ever before his eyes, lay in wait and bided his time.

The coach had not proceeded far on its way before Stevers introduced the subject of highwaymen. He had heard tell that this heath was a favourite ride of these gentry. Folk were given to gossip, he said.

"But I fear it is all too true," Molly answered. "There is great danger in crossing this heath to those who have anything to lose. There are many highwaymen hereabout."

"I have no doubt, I have no doubt," replied Stevers, carelessly; "but what of that? One good man, or at most two, atop a coach can put a dozen of the best to route. But passengers are cowards. They fling their wallets to the first cadger that cares to ask for them. I'd like to see them stop me."

"You would not fight them, surely?" asked the girl, anxiously.

"Would I not. Ha, ha, ha, a dozen of them. Let them try. You see this"—he drew forth his purse and jingled the contents. "There are thirty good guineas and more in it, and my friend has the same. If the 'waymen want 'em let 'em come on, and we'll see."

"I will be frightened out of my wits if they do; but"—she looked at the young man,—“I am glad you are here.”

Stevens took her hand, and, pressing it gently, drew it towards him, at the same time looking lovingly into her eyes. Trustful, simple, good, kind and loving, he saw all these virtues at a single glance, and his heart swelled with manly pride and passion at the thought that he was soon to deliver her from the hands of his friends. Thank Heaven that Josiah Krail had failed to catch the coach. Thank Heaven. Leaning forward, Stevers touched the Whip on the shoulder.

"They say there's highwaymen about. Should we be

molested, at the first sign lay on the whip. I and my friend will see to it that you are not harmed—that is, if you do as you are told," he added, ominously.

The Whip glanced over his shoulder at the young man. The Whip was no fool. He had met Stevers before, but now discreetly held his tongue. He wondered what was up, what "their little game," as he put it; but, well, he had to drive the coach across the heath for a living, and interfering with highwaymen was not the way to make sure of dying of old age. So he drove on.

A mile farther on Stevers suddenly started to his feet.

"Stop the coach," he said, sternly.

The Whip drew the fiery steeds to a standstill.

"What is it? What's wrong? Have you seen anything?" asked the passengers, eagerly. Stevers returned no answer to their questions; but stood finger to lip and listened. Turning to McWhinney, he asked:

"Did you hear aught?"

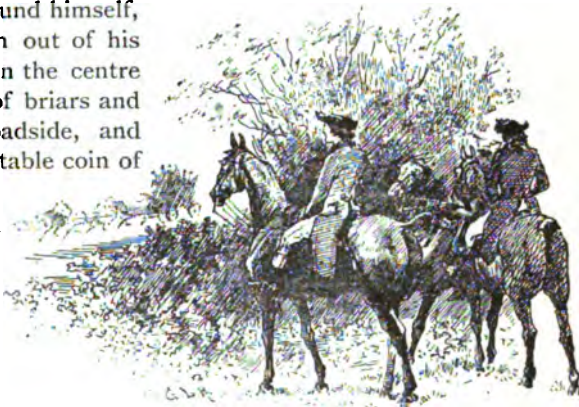
"The champ o' a horse," McWhinney answered. Stevers nodded wisely. Then he said:

"Whip, drive ahead, and if I shout, lay lash to horse, I say."

The Whip gathered his reins the tighter and, setting the horses atrot, he waited orders. Stevers peered ahead into the night. The passengers held their breath. All of a sudden Stevers shouted "Lay on," and the next instant the Whip was furiously lashing his beasts into a gallop, and right ahead a horseman sprung his mount from the bushes into the very middle of the road. Above the lashing of the whip, the swaying and creaking of the coach, the screams of the women and shouts of the men, Stevers heard the well-known voice of Bulstrode bellow: "Halt! Hold, as ye're a living man." At the same moment a half-dozen horsemen scrambled their mounts out of the bushes to the side of the highway to surround the coach. Bulstrode, first flourishing his pistol, fired it point blank at the Whip, the report ringing ominously on the night air. The Whip, poor soul, thought his last moments had come, and would have pulled up if it had been in his power. But the horses, taking fright at all the hubbub, dashed into the crew of highwaymen, scattering them to the left and the right, and made off, the bits between their teeth, as fast as the wind. Stevers and McWhinney fearlessly braved the fusillade of shots fired,

and Stevers at least would have replied, had it not been that he was sorely inconvenienced by Molly. The lass, at the first shot, flung her arms around the young man, sobbing hysterically the while. Stevers shook himself free as gently as he could, and was, to tell the truth, deeply chagrined to see her arms immediately flung round the neck of his companion, McWhinney. But there was no time to protest. Shouting at the top of his voice defiance to highwaymen, he fired his two pistols bravely into the air.

The next minute something happened. Poor Stevers, it must be told, received a terrible batter between the shoulders—from whom he could not say—and did a double somersault in the air, saw ten million stars explode before his eyes, and the next instant found himself, every bit of breath out of his body, on his back in the centre of a great clump of briars and thorns by the roadside, and from this uncomfortable coin of vantage saw the coach rock and rattle and disappear into the night. What in the name of goodness had happened? It seemed to the highway-



"WAITING."

man that a meteorite must have fallen on him. He attempted to rise, but no, at every move a thousand thorns pricked his flesh and compelled him to be quiet. He was on the point of raising a hullabaloo for help when he heard a few rods distant the voice of McWhinney. McWhinney swore. He began by cursing himself, McWhinney, for a fool, and Stevers for an ass, and then women collectively for jades, and he swore on his word as an honest man that his back was broken and most of his legs forby, and declared that should things continue as they had of late been going on, he would never live to be decently hanged. Stevers grew impatient.

"Quit your confounded row, and help me out of this nest of vipers," he shouted.

The "row" ceased, and limping towards him through the

dark came McWhinney, hatless, pistolless, covered with dust, and carrying a sprained arm close to his bosom.

"Help ye out, ye brainless loon. Help ye out! Ye'll stay there till the crack o' doom ere I turn my little finger for ye," shouted McWhinney angrily. "You've broken every bone in my body wi' your honey-doving and your billy-cooing. Rest content where ye be. A crow can filch as well's a miller and fly forby."

"Throttle you and your crow and your miller," savagely retorted Stevers. "Pull me out o' here and I'll crack your sponce for ye. Gad, I'm skewered like a heathcock for roasting. Give me a hand."

Now this polite conversation, carried on at the top of their voices, immediately attracted the attention of Bulstrode. Hearing the hubbub, he guessed at once that his faithful men had managed to bundle the rich publican out of the running coach; so he swept down upon the scene. There he found to his astonishment his two men alone and in the middle of a savage discussion. Springing from the saddle, he came forward.

"What's the meaning o' this?" he demanded.

McWhinney was about to reply, but Stevers shouted:—

"Lift me out of this, and not stand there gaping like a fool, and asking silly questions. Give me a hand!"

"Softly, Stevers, softly," answered Bulstrode, soothingly, at the same time seizing the outstretched hand, and with one jerk landing his lieutenant out of his thorny bed. "But where's Josiah Krail?"

"We were jolted off the top of the coach——"

"It's a lie! It's a lie!" cried McWhinney, excited. "'Twas that red-faced wench o' yours who pitched ye ower the side o' the coach, and the grandmother did the same for me."

"Nonsense! Rubbish! Trash!" Stevers replied, scornfully.

"I tell ye she's made a pigeon o' you and o' me," reiterated McWhinney, excitedly. Bulstrode smelt a rat.

"Let me find the road across this moor," he said, quietly. "Tell me what has happened? What wench and grandmother is it ye speak o'?"

"Krail was not aboard the coach," Stevers answered stubbornly, "but two pretty girls were travelling with their grandmother, and of course we paid our respects to them. As there were none to rob on the coach, we made up our minds for a joke to dash past you, and did so; and found ourselves here, how I don't know."



"DID A COMPLETE SOMERSAULT IN THE AIR."

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"But I know well. 'Twas that sly-faced quean o' yours —" McWhinney stopped short and felt in his breast. "I have paid dearly for the hug she gave me. My purse is gone."

Stevens intuitively slipped his hand under his cloak. His purse, too, was gone.

Bulstrode nipped his chin between the broad of his index finger and the ball of his thumb as he looked the young men up and down.

"A red-faced wench, is it? Ah! a red-faced wench, and a fat grandmother. A red-faced wench and a fat grandmother who throw two young gallants overboard. I see, I see. A wonderful old lady I ha' small doubt. And the wench! I wonder now had the wench on her forehead such a thing as, we'll say, a bit scar wi' a loop o' golden hair to hide it?"

Stevens and McWhinney were dumbfounded, Rube Haybittle slapped his thigh and burst into a roar of laughter.

"The cock's turned tail, the cock's turned tail. It wilna fight," he shouted.

"Moll o' the Plough Inn," Bulstrode continued, quietly, "and wi' her her grandmother, old Josiah Krail, stout and sturdy. The quean wi' a scar and a tongue as nimble as a squirrel, forty years if she's a day, and looks twenty." Bulstrode nodded his head a score times before adding: "Man, but she's plucked ye. We'll no hear the end o' this in a hurry. She's picked the hawk's een this time. Aye, but she's a good man spoiled wi' petticoats."

He gave the signal to mount. Stevens and McWhinney had nothing to say.

"We brought your horses wi' us, but I am loath to rob ye o' any part o' your grand joke, and the better to appreciate all its points ye will walk the five odd leagues across the heath to the Raven. If ye fall in wi' any other lasses on your way run for your lives, or they may brain ye wi' a blow from a ringlet. Good night to ye," and the highwaymen sprang out upon the moor, leaving Stevens and McWhinney to march the weary miles in uncongenial company, I fear.



Should Christmas be Abolished?

BY JEROME K. JEROME, DR. JOSEPH PARKER, EDEN PHILLPOTTS, G. R. SIMS, BARRY PAIN, AND J. FREEMAN BELL.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY LOUIS GUNNIS AND PENRYN STANLEY.

There are some things men simply cannot do,

and to abolish Christmas is one of them. This business

Dr. Parker says
it's impossible.

of abolition is much more difficult than it appears to be. For my own part, I'd rather have Christmas abolished than degraded. The one day I should like to see abolished is All-fools' Day; that can only be done by abolishing the fools. And the fools never will be abolished, so the thing must just go on. April fools are about the most innocent we can find. My wonder is, however, that with a thousand society-mongers and company-promoters constantly cudgelling their brains in arranging new frauds, we



KICKED OUT!

have not seen a prospectus for an April-fools' Asylum, Limited ; capital, six ciphers without an integer.



BROUGHT BACK AGAIN !

Yes ; let us abolish Christmas Day. Let us cut out its first syllable, and let the world free from a name in whose very heart there is sacred and tender festival. We cannot ! Let us compel all the schools to go on with their grammar and geography, and give the go-by to December 25th. We cannot ! Let us shut up all the home-coming, and banish plum-pudding, roast beef, and crackers from the family table. We cannot ! The children wont let you, and in all such things the children are masters. If

you turned Christmas out at the front door, they would bring it in by the back. If you kicked it out of the house, they would set it up in the back garden. The children will have Christmas, so the old folks had better submit. I will prophesy what would catch and keep a majority vote : two Christmases in the year, two plum-puddings, two sets of Christmas cards, two Boxing Days. *There* you would succeed !

* * * *

Tiger Tom, who lives immediately opposite, tried And gives reasons. to abolish Christmas Day, and didn't he catch it?

You may go bail he did. As soon as it was known in the neighbourhood, Tom's credit fell away to nothing. No butcher would call upon him for orders ; no laundress would wash his linen ; no gardener would do up his front garden ; every night boys threw stones at his windows. But the worst of all, in Tom's own opinion, was, the chimney sweep declined, with unsuspected dignity, to clean the kitchen flue. So much for new tricks and pranks. "I'll 'bolish you," said the sooty sweep, "if that's your little game" ; and he shook his hand-brush at Tom's brick chimney. The year following, Tiger Tom issued a circular proposing two Christmases in one year, and at once he became the most

popular man in the very parish where I pay more rates than he does ! I was simply nowhere. The butcher said he always knew that Tom was as good as any three weavers he ever heard of, and the grimy sweep declared that he would clean Tom' flue with a brand new brush. Now this is a simple fact known to the memory of my own imagination, and what is further known is that several boys waited upon Tom and assured him that it was the other boys who had thrown the stones. Tom was a far-sighted man, so from that moment he gave up the game of "bolishing," and steadily "went in" for Church and State in all their branches and traditions. An old lady well known in the parish went in for a quiet abolition of Christmas. She did it on the sly, behind the door as it were, and round the corner, so as to avoid publicity and persecution. The thing was a great success, and would have been a completer triumph still if she had not discovered, mainly from a pungent scent near the kitchen stairs, that Debby, her stout



CHRISTMAS IN THE KITCHEN.

old maid, was entertaining three young men, an elderly aunt, and four senior Sunday scholars, on roast goose, plum-pudding, mince pies, and brandy sauce. Debby, too, was trying to do it all on the sly in approval of the habits of her mistress.

Abolish Christmas, if you dare !

* * * *

It is, I suppose, significant of the day, that such a question as this, and at such a time, should arise for calm consideration in a public print. Shall Christmas be abolished? A cheerful problem to propound in a country popularly supposed to have been Christian for centuries! And to ask it just now is like plotting to murder a man in his own house. The word Christmas is thus derived: From *Christ* it comes, and the Saxon *Mæsse*, or feast. It



"MILLIONS HAVE MISERABLY PERISHED."

signifies, therefore, a festival in commemoration of the Nativity of Christ, a fact which many people doubtless know already. Rumour indicates that the celebration was first honoured publicly in 98, and that in 137 Pope Telesphorus ordered Christmas to be henceforth held a solemn feast-day. The feast-day remains; the solemnity has largely exhaled. It must be so, else how could we ask whether Christmas had best be abolished? Of course, the question has been raised a good many times before this, and strong men have tried to answer it practically.

A thing may be abolished in print, and yet do well and enjoy reasonable length of days. On the other hand, in some cases the sword is mightier than any goose-quill whatever. Take Diocletian. Holding most firmly that Christmas was an error and a blot on the civilisation and religious advancement of his reign, he, when at Nicomedia, during the proper season of the year, took definite steps. In fact, he ignited sundry Christmas parties at that time assembled. Six hundred Christians are known to have perished on the occasion; and we may safely take it that at least as many more were badly singed, fried, roasted, grilled, devilled, and otherwise discouraged by this application of sudden fire. This is not the place, nor am I the man, to dwell at any length on the subject of Christian martyrs; but generations upon generations have worked very hard to preserve Christmas; millions have miserably perished for the great principle involved therein; and neither tyrant-handled steel nor stake, nor the lion, have proved quite equal to abolishing the anniversary.

Of course, my editor wanted me to regard Christmas from a purely social standpoint. I knew that all the time; but I looked up the subject, and it raised another train of thought. Religiously, therefore, I say, let every man tinker up his own ethics, and mind his own business, and follow the creed that proves most warm and comforting to him, and keep Christmas if he will, and be greatly blessed in it; socially, my opinion is that the thing has gone far enough. What connection can exist between this festival and the inclination to put an inordinate strain upon the digestive system, might form interesting subject for inquiry if life was longer; but I shall only point out here that every venerable institution becomes presently loaded with a parasite growth of noxious, futile horrors, and that Christmas, socially, has now become a mere peg to hang tax-papers and bills, and indigestion, and juvenile holidays, and Christmas boxes upon. The

Every man should follow his own creed.



"THE CHILDREN REALLY ENJOY IT."

concern is ruined by this blight. Circumstances nibble and gnaw all the sentiment out of it, leaving a mere gallows or scare-crow that juts up painfully on the yearly path of every-day life. We approach Christmas with added anxiety and much distrust; we pass it in simulated jollity; we turn our backs upon it with a sigh of relief. Only the children really enjoy it, only the physicians get any temporal advantage out of it. Not that these things should be so. Strip the institution from its accessories, and you find what might be a happy enough annual festivity. First, one cannot do away with the fact that Christmas Day is also Quarter Day. Herein, to a well-regulated mind, must always lie the main source of uneasiness when approaching this anniversary. Once abolish such an aspect of the season, and British humanity will regard it with happier view. For my own part, merely in passing, I should be disposed to consider three quarter days in the year as sufficient, and four as certainly one too many. But take a Christmas Day which is not a Quarter Day, and you instantly strip off a pestilential accrescence of the festival. Likewise the weather should be changed, to do which effectively the date must be altered by six months or so; and as another essential to the better appreciation and more lasting enjoyment

of the time, all giving of Christmas presents and sending of Christmas cards should most surely be discontinued.

* * * *

Christmas needs
re-modelling.

Again, there can be no peace on earth, and very little goodwill towards men, so long as Christmas boxes continue to be demanded by the baser sort. I have not yet been able to make dust-cart assistants and lamplighters and errand boys (who never run errands for me, by the way), and many such-like persons, understand the lack of dignity attaching to this clamorous demand for unearned increment. They are content to waive the dignity so that the increment be forthcoming. Christmas, in fact, might be altogether glorified and different if people gave us tips and sent



CHRISTMAS DAY.

us hampers and turkeys stuffed with five-pound notes and so forth, instead of wasting them elsewhere. But when the community rejoices, it often happens that the individual, in American phrase, "gets left." My conclusion is, then, that Christmas should be a pleasanter season than is generally the case. It needs remodelling in sundry important directions. The remedy lies in our own hands. It has been everybody's business for centuries,

and, therefore, not a soul has risen to resolutely tackle the problem. Until the man appears, we must do the best we can. I shall go into the country myself, as usual, and try and enjoy things, and give and take and be festive and genial, and even obliging and considerate. For the rest, let me wish the chance reader, a temperate and generous Christmas, and if the year that has passed chronicles happiness and success for him, now let a drop from his own full cup flow over to brighten a little the lives of those less blessed. My own address, by the

way, is———but no, fifty to one you have a hundred equally deserving persons nearer your own door.

* * * *

I don't think that it is quite abolished yet, but it is a very feeble imitation of the genuine article in which we indulge to-day. The festive season, the season of peace and goodwill, brotherly love and Christian charity, doesn't fit in with modern ideas. The age which sneers at Dickens cannot be expected to go out of its way to keep alive his own particular invention. The Dickens Christmas has been steadily deteriorating for some years past. It began to wobble when the Christmas Annual deserted snowed-up travellers who told a sympathetic story apiece, for cynical attacks in verse on prominent public characters. "The coming K—" was the first distinct sign of the going Christmas. The libellous Valentine practically killed the 14th of February, the libellous Annual practically killed the 25th of December.

* * * *



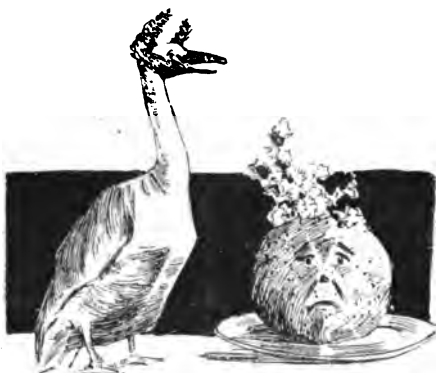
SEASONABLE WEATHER!

It was only in an age of cheery optimism that Christmas, the conventional Christmas of "God bless everybody," could be accepted. The moment the cynic got an audience of kindred souls, the hollowness of plum-pudding philanthropy was bound to be exposed, and a general revulsion of feeling was inevitable. And the climate came to the assistance of the critics. Old Father Christmas, with a flowing beard, a red nose, a bowl of punch, and a baron of beef, was all right with six inches of snow on the ground and icicles hanging from the trees; but old Father Christmas in a damp, muggy atmosphere cut a pitiable figure, and his fate could only cause a shudder to a played-out race that has adopted the French cuisine, and has long ago abandoned hot grogs for brandies-and-seltzers and lemon squashes.

The old Christmas was in an age of cheery optimism.

The new Christmas is a supercilious sneer.

Twenty years ago every Englishman swore by Christmas ; to-day every Englishman who swears at all swears at it—not at Christmas itself, which is a Christian festival, but at the “Merry Christmas,” which had become a pagan Saturnalia. The old Christmas, which was a broad grin, has gone, never to return ; the New



FOREIGNERS ?

Christmas, which is a supercilious sneer, will in time become as great a nuisance as the old one, and then that will go too, and Christmas will be the 25th of December, a day on which all respectable Christians go to church because of the great event of which it is the anniversary, and a general holiday. The holiday part of the programme is never likely

to be given up, because the English people never part with that sort of thing when they have once got hold of it. But in time I believe that even the plum-pudding will go by the (hospitable) board. There is nothing particularly English or particularly Christmassy about plum-pudding. As a matter of fact, it is on the bill of fare of the Café Royal, which is a French restaurant, all the year round.

* * * *

Barry Pain
apologises.

There are, of course, such strenuous and dogmatic people about—people who know whether or not the House of Lords is wanted, whether cremation is preferable to burial, whether capital punishment is, or is not, a good kind of punishment to have, and what is the truth about Ireland. It is that kind of person who ought to settle this question of the abolition of Christmas. He would have beaten the whole thing out on broad principles in a small debating society, and sent you the result. I can see him with ecstatic eyes proclaiming Christmas to be the brightest jewel in the crown of

our civilisation (loud applause); I can see him point to it fiercely as the canker eating into the heart of our national life (hear, hear). He would come to something definite; he was born well-informed, and will die cocksure. The circumstances of my own birth were less fortunate; for any adequate discussion of the abolition of Christmas I should need to have more knowledge than I possess, or could obtain by the study of a lifetime. Of course, any sacrifice that I could make, I would make; it is not that I shrink from that amount of study; it is that I sincerely hope that this number of your magazine will go to press before my lifetime is concluded. Briefly, your problem is too enormous for me. I can only look at it from one exceedingly mean, paltry, personal point of view; I propose, therefore, with your kind permission, to be paltry.



"I CAN SEE HIM!"

* * * *

Well, I consider Christmas from the point of view of my own profession. In the practice of my profession I am occasionally called upon to write what may be called either garbage or humorous matter, according to the talent for invective of its critic. Now, for the production of this **garbage**—or, as some say, humorous matter—you must first of all have your subject. Now what could be richer in suggestion than the Christmas season? Its jests have the sanction of antiquity, and no one could apply to them that adjective which most hurts the modern humorist. Consider Christmas dispassionately, and you will find there the following:—

But is compelled to take a paltry view of the question.

- (1.) Jokes about Plumbers.
- (2.) Jokes about Indigestion.
- (3.) Jokes about Intemperance.
- (4.) Jokes about Poverty, arising from:—
 - (a.) Christmas Boxes.
 - (b.) Christmas Bills.

The season, it will be observed, is full of lightness and grace. It means many different things to many different people. To one who depends upon his output of humorous matter—or, as some say, garbage—Christmas is an income without being vulgar. As such, I am naturally inclined to welcome it. There are but few seasons in the year which really lend themselves to the production of refined garbage—garbage that can be calculated never to bring the smile of amusement to the cheek of criticism. Christmas is one of these seasons. If Christmas were to be abolished, the very reason for the existence of some of our finest and most delicious garbage—which, after all, is shorter than humorous matter—would be lost at once. I can only hope that the influence of *THE IDLER* will be exerted on the right side. It would be a terrible thing to see a jest die that had been with us in the nursery, grown up with us, saddened our most thoughtful moments in sickness or in health. In the cause of the best, the oldest, the most generally acknowledged garbage, let Christmas continue.

* * * *

J. Freeman Bell is historical. I am not surprised to learn that the abolition of Christmas is being seriously considered. As a rule, I am in favour of proposed changes. One likes to be up-to-date in one's opinions as in everything else; and last year's opinions are as stale as last year's fashions. But somehow I don't take kindly to the suggestion that there shall be no more Christmas. The festival, if I mistake not, boasts a respectable antiquity, having been invented by a certain Charles Dickens, who seems to have been a highly popular novelist in his day. Like all who boast higher education, I have read a great deal about him, and gather that he was crude and non-introspective, and almost morbidly pure and antiquated in his treatment of sexual topics. Still, spite of these defects, it appears to me that it would be well to preserve the festival due to his pen, if only to remind us how much superior we are to our predecessors. We need some such reminder occasionally, otherwise we might become dissatisfied with ourselves.

If my apology for Christmas rested upon this historical argument alone, I am afraid it would not be available. A mere sentiment of homage to the past will not suffice to keep an institution alive nowadays, unless, indeed, it happens to be an abuse and connected with the City. But there are numerous other considerations which inspire me to raise my voice on behalf of the rapidly decaying festival of which I have read so much. Family affection owes much to it. It is highly desirable that the ties linking us with our relatives should not be allowed to slacken. It is a sweet and beautiful thing to reflect upon the love that members of all well-regulated families entertain for one another.



"CHRISTMAS BILLS!"

Nevertheless, the amount of time at disposal for such reflections, and for the strengthening of the links, is limited. Christmas enables us to secure these ends with the smallest possible expenditure and energy. Whole treasures of sentiment are conveyed by means of a Christmas card; and the family hearts, sundered by distance perhaps, beat as one on the twenty-fifth day of December, provided the regulations of the post office as to posting early have been duly observed. It is sad to reflect that a neglect of this precaution may postpone, if it does not altogether prevent, the affecting unisonal beating of the cardiac apparatus. Closely connected, too, with that sweetening of the affections the threatened holiday produces is the chastening of the emotions for which it is likewise responsible. Few of us are independent of the ministrations of those who cater for humanity's daily wants, who feed and clothe us, and so on. In the hurry and worry of life's struggle, these highly deserving persons are apt to be forgotten. But Christmas comes, and with it the gentle reminders by which our attention is called to those to whom we owe so much. A thrill of gratitude pervades our being, and we are touched into a consciousness of the interdependence of our common humanity. It is a great and good thing to be thus

thrilled and lifted above the monotonous every-day plane; and happy is he who can translate his emotions into "something on account"; though scarcely less happy he who has to content himself with feeling that he will when he can. All this is great and good, I say—once a year. If Christmas were abolished, there would be no regularity in this evoking of our tenderest feelings, and they might also be evoked irregularly and consequently too frequently, with corresponding injury to our nervous system.

* * * *

Now that I come to think of it, too, there are other reasons why Christmas should not hastily be done away with, reasons not of a purely sentimental character either. Many estimable ladies and gentlemen,



REMORSE!

some of whom I have the pleasure of numbering among my personal friends, break forth into prose and verse and pen-and-ink sketches for the purpose of bringing into being the many publications for the possession of which Christmas infects the public with a

craving. Now, if there were to be no more Christmas, all these estimable persons would, of necessity, be driven into occupying themselves with something useful. With the probable success or failure of their attempt to turn their energies into an entirely new direction, I am not concerned; but their sudden influx into an already overcrowded labour market is an economic catastrophe not to be viewed by thinking people with equanimity. The abolition of Christmas would, therefore, entail consequences not lightly to be faced. Several

minor matters also occur to me. The twenty-fifth of December is a great awakener of conscience. Many who are usually eupeptic, and consequently conscienceless, experiment with their digestion on that day, and with considerable success. Remorse is awakened as a natural result, and they are thus touched to diviner issues than would come within the province of their souls did eupepsia hold unbroken sway. Then, too, the world has a rest, which is good for it, and us. Nothing much happens. The evening papers do not appear, and even the morning ones pad largely. Events postpone themselves. Now and then, of course, some selfish and ambitious event will seize the opportunity offered by the quiescence of things in general to break the tacit agreement, and get undue and unwarranted publicity. This species of blacklegism is, however, I am glad to say, the exception, and the general behaviour of events on this score is irreproachable. Moreover, Christmas affords opportunities for osculation that are lacking at other seasons. These, no doubt, afford much gratification to numerous persons who have the courage to defy the omnipresent bacillus. I think, without unduly flattering myself, that I have made out a good and strong case against the abolition of Christmas. I may add, however, so that my argument shall be in no way incomplete, that it helps us to remember, what our history from day to day makes us forget, that the religion of this country is nominally Christian.



"AFFORDS OPPORTUNITIES FOR OSCULATION."

* * * *

There was a time when I would have answered this question off-hand. That was years ago, when I knew everything. In those days, wishful to give the world the benefit of my wisdom, and seeking for myself a candlestick wherefrom my brilliancy might be visible and helpful unto men, I arrived before a dingy portal

Jerome K. Jerome
settled this matter
years ago.

in Chequers Street, St. Luke's, behind which a conclave of young men, together with a few old enough to have known better, met every Friday evening for the purpose of discussing and arranging the affairs of the universe. "Speaking members" were charged 10s. 6d. per annum, which, worked out, must have shown an extremely moderate average per word; and "gentlemen whose subscriptions were more than three months in arrear," became, by Rule 7, powerless for good or evil. We called ourselves "The Stormy Petrels," and, under the sympathetic shadow of those wings, I laboured two seasons towards the reformation of the human race; until, indeed, our treasurer, an earnest young man, and a tireless foe of all that was conventional, departed for the East, leaving behind him a balance sheet, showing that the club owed £42 15s. 4d., and that the balance of subscriptions for the current year, amounting to a little over £38, had been "carried forward," but as to where the report was silent. Thereupon our landlord, a man utterly without ideals, seized our furniture, and offered to sell it back to us for £15. We pointed out to him that this was



"THE STORMY PETRELS."

an extravagant price, and tendered him £5. The negotiations terminated with ungentlemanly language on his part, and "The

Stormy Petrels" scattered, never to foregather again above the troubled waters of humanity. Nowadays, listening to the feeble plans of modern reformers, I cannot help but smile, remembering what was done in Chequers Street, St. Luke's, in an age when *The Daily Chronicle* was the meek *Clerkenwell News*; when *The Echo* was regarded as a revolutionary organ; and before millionaires had started halfpenny newspapers to attack capitalists. I am informed that there is abroad the question of abolishing the House of Lords! Why, "The Stormy Petrels" abolished the aristocracy and the Crown in one evening, and then only adjourned for the purpose of appointing a committee to draw up, and have ready, a Republican constitution by the following Friday evening. They talk of Empire lounges. We closed the doors of every Music Hall in London eighteen years ago, by twenty-nine votes to seventeen. They had a patient hearing and were ably defended; but we found that the tendency of such amusements was anti-progressive, and against the best interests of an intellectually advancing democracy. I met the mover of the condemnatory resolution at the Old "Pav" the following evening, and we continued the discussion over a bottle of Bass. He strengthened his argument by persuading me to sit out the whole of the three songs sung by the "Lion Comique"; but I subsequently retorted successfully by bringing under his notice the dancing of a lady in blue tights and flaxen hair. I forget her name, but never shall I cease to remember her exquisite charm and beauty. Ah, me! how charming and how beautiful "artistes" were in those golden days! Likewise we abolished capital punishment and war; we were excellent young men at heart. And now here comes along the editor of THE IDLER, asking me whether I would abolish Christmas, thereby reminding me that that also we abolished, together with Bank Holidays, by a majority of twelve. I never recollect any proposal to abolish anything ever being lost when put to the vote. There were few things that we Stormy Petrels did not abolish. We attacked Christmas on grounds of expediency, and killed it by ridicule. We exposed the hollow mockery of Christmas sentiment; we held up to scorn the Christmas number published in October; the coloured Christmas supplement, with its everlasting child and dog; the Christmas card and necessary Christmas present, which everybody hated giving and no one cared to receive; we abused the

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indigestible Christmas dinner, the tiresome Christmas party, the silly Christmas pantomime. Our funny member was sidesplitting on the subject of Christmas Waits; our social reformer most bitter upon Christmas drunkenness; our economist indignant about Christmas boxes; our philosopher pointed out with merciless logic the evil effects of Christmas charities. Only one argument of any weight with us was advanced in favour of the festival, and that was our leading cynic's suggestion that it was worth enduring the miseries of Christmas to enjoy the soul-satisfying comfort of the after reflection that it was all over, and could not occur again for another year.

* * * *

But now is not so
sure about the
answer.

But now, Mr. Editor, when you ask me the question, I am less inclined to answer it off-hand, for since those days when I was prepared to put this old world of ours to rights upon all matters, I have seen many sights and heard many sounds, and I am not quite so sure as I once was that my particular views are the only possible correct ones. Christmas seems to me somewhat meaningless; but then, Mr. Editor, I have looked through windows in poverty-stricken streets, and have seen dingy parlours gay with many chains of coloured paper. They stretched from corner to corner of the smoke-grimed ceiling, they fell in clumsy festoons from the cheap gasalier, they framed the fly-blown mirror and the tawdry pictures; and I know tired hands and eyes worked for many hours to fashion and fix those foolish chains, saying, "It will please him—She will like to see the room look pretty"; and as I have looked at them they have grown, in some mysterious manner, to look beautiful to me. The gaudy-coloured child and dog irritates me, I confess; but I have watched a grimy, inartistic personage, smoothing it affectionately with toil-stained hand, while eager faces crowded round to admire and wonder at its blatant crudity. It hangs to this day in its cheap frame above the chimney-piece, the one bright spot relieving those sordid walls; dull eyes stare and stare again at it, catching a vista, through its flashy tints, of the far-off land of art. Christmas Waits annoy me, and I

yearn to throw open the window and fling coal at them, and am often only restrained from giving way to this longing by the thought that, in the darkness, I might miss them, and hit, perhaps, instead the policeman.. But I have known "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing" wheezily chanted by fog-filled throats, and accompanied, hopelessly out of time, by a cornet and a flute, bring a great look of gladness to a workworn face. To her it was a message of hope and love, making the hard life taste sweet. The mere thought of family gatherings, so customary at Christmas time, bores us superior people; but I think of an incident told me by a certain man, a friend of mine. This man knew a woman, and she was of a type that we virtuous people who are without sin do not care to speak of. One Christmas my friend, visiting a country house in Norfolk, came face to face with her, much to his surprise. The door of the little farm-house was open; she and an older woman were ironing at a table, and as her soft white hands passed to and fro, folding and smoothing the rumpled heap, she laughed and talked with the elder woman, concerning simple, homely things. My friend's shadow fell across her work, and she, looking up, their eyes met; but her face said plainly, "I don't know you, here, and here you do not know me. Here, I am a woman loved and respected. In this place, we have nothing to do with one another." My friend passed in and spoke to the older woman, the wife of one of his host's tenants, and she turned towards and introduced the younger: "My daughter, sir. We do not see her very often. She is in a place in London, and cannot get away. But she always spends a few days with us at Christmas." "It is the season for family reunions," answered my friend, with just the suggestion of a sneer, which escaped from him unconsciously, and for which he hated himself. "Yes, sir," said the woman, not noticing; "she has never missed her Christmas dinner with the old folks, have you, Bess?" "No, mother," replied the girl, simply, and bent her head again over her work. So for these few days every year this woman left her furs and jewels, her fine clothes and dainty foods, behind her, and lived for a little space with what was clean and wholesome. It was the one anchor holding her to womanhood; and one likes to think that it was, perhaps, in the end strong enough to save her from the drifting waters. All which arguments in favour of Christmas and

of Christmas customs are, I admit, Mr. Editor, purely sentimental ones, but I have lived long enough to doubt whether sentiment has not its legitimate place in the economy of life.



People I Have Never Met.

BY SCOTT RANKIN.

"ANTHONY HOPE."



"THE PRISONER OF ZENDA."



An Acceptable Christmas Present.

THIS is the season of the year when the average person sends to a friend some pleasing little token of remembrance; usually coupled with an allusion to Christmas or New Year's Day. The custom is a most commendable one, and Christmas cards, as now made, are very pretty and artistic. Still, most people receive more cards than they rightly know what to do with. This being the case, THE IDLER wishes to propose something new, which will at once have the happy result of gratifying some thousands of the friends of its friends; while, at the same time, the plan, if largely adopted, will undoubtedly benefit the Magazine, and enable it to give more and more to its readers.

The plan is this: You send us one shilling and sixpence in penny postage stamps, or by postal order, and we will do the rest. We will send to any friend you name those three superb issues of THE IDLER, the October, November, and December numbers. If you forward us your card when you write, with your friend's address, we will enclose the card in the package, so that your friend will know from whom the parcel comes. We will pack the numbers securely, and pay the postage on them. The

copies we send will be new copies, for the October and November numbers went out of print shortly after publication, and we have no unsold copies in our possession. The plates have been again put on the press, and an edition is now being printed especially to fill the orders that we expect to get from everyone who has a friendly feeling for this Magazine. To be perfectly frank, we wish to reach the friends of our friends, for we are sure they will appreciate *THE IDLER* when once it is put into their hands.

When you think of the amount of interesting reading that you will thus present to your friend, of the quality of it, of the great names of the writers, of the hundreds of beautiful pictures, of the dozens of absorbing stories, you may imagine the pleasure you will bestow on your friend by causing such a charming collection of tales and pictures to drop in about Christmas time.

There will be three instalments of CONAN DOYLE'S great serial, "The Stark Munro Letters"; three complete stories of adventure and stirring incident by GILBERT PARKER; three of those delightful and delicate society sketches by ANTHONY HOPE; a composite story by JEROME K. JEROME and four other well-known writers; a brilliant poem by RUDYARD KIPLING; a fascinating article by I. ZANGWILL; and many other attractions too numerous to mention.





BY W. L. ALDEN.

THE *Purgatorial Triplets*, by Sarah Marcella Aster (Peters & Sons), marks a new stride forward on the part of the New Woman. The author presents us with a portrait of the very newest New Woman, and whether we like the portrait or not, there can be little doubt that it is a truthful one. "Hysteria Beauchamp," the heroine of *The Purgatorial Triplets*, is a profound student of all philosophies and religions, and she also has a thorough knowledge of roulette, which she thinks to be far more spiritual than Christianity. Purity and Atheism are the "causes" to which she devotes her life. In the interests of the former she is an implacable foe of marriage, and it is owing to her conviction that chance is the ruler of the universe that she preaches the holiness of roulette. Young, beautiful, rich, and well-born, she has the world at her feet, but one day she awakes to the consciousness that she is in love. There are three men with whom she has become somewhat intimately associated. These are an earnest and enthusiastic gambler; a bold and athletic burglar; and an Advanced curate. She loves not one alone but all three, and in these circumstances the path of duty becomes thorny and obscure. The gentle spiritual nature of the gambler draws her towards him; the rugged masculinity of the burglar charms her; and the brilliant audacity of the curate seems to her to be nearly irresistible. This curate is unquestionably the true hero of the book. Although he believes in nothing—not even in roulette—it is generally understood that he is a man with a past. New Women whisper behind their fans that at one time the curate believed in religion, and openly approved of the Christian code of morals. Indeed,

it was notorious that in his youth he had repeatedly insulted the purest impulses of womanhood by performing the degrading ceremony of marriage. True, he had repented and reformed, but the evil reputation of his youth still clung to him, and the New Women dared not trust him, although in their hearts they universally admired him.

* * * *

The scene in which Hysteria is brought to the sudden knowledge of the dangerous character of the curate is vividly painted. "Hysteria was sitting at her dining-room table, gracefully swinging her feet, and repeating dreamily a verse from the 'Shastas.' Wilkins (the curate) stood before her, with his hands plunged deep in his pockets, and a frown on his stern, dark face. 'And so,' he exclaimed, 'you confess that you love all three of us.' She bowed her head, but her lips did not move. 'What are you going to do about it?' he asked, with a bitter excavated laugh. 'Do you suppose that I am going to share your love with those Johnnies? I'll see you and them in——'

" 'Hush! Oh, hush!' she cried. 'Can it be that you have not yet rooted out your Christian selfishness! Are you deaf to the voice of altruism? Can you——?'

" 'Enough of this,' cried Wilkins, hoarsely. 'I detest your altruism. You are weak enough to believe in it, but I believe in absolutely nothing. Religion, roulette, altruism, gravitation, the binomial theorem—I reject them all. Choose between me who stand naked of all shreds of belief, and those two cowardly conventional believers, one of whom respects policemen, while the other reverences roulette. They both reverence you; deny it if you can. As for me, I scorn to reverence or respect your alleged soul, your hypothetical brain, or your much too thin body. Accept my love, and with me you will rise to undreamed-of heights of disbelief. Choose either of those fellows, and you will sink surely and steadily into an abyss of belief. Decide quickly, for I shall not give you another chance.'

"She raised her tearful eyes to his. The man's eyes burned into hers like the rays of an electric search-light. She felt herself fluttering like a moth into his soul's deep parabolic reflector. 'Micah Wilkins!' she faltered, 'I can resist no longer.' And she threw herself from the table into his strong alpaca arms.

" 'We will be married at once,' said Wilkins.

"With a wild cry the unhappy girl tore herself loose. For a moment the universe seemed to crash into ruins around her. The moon and stars, the paraffin lamps, and the curate's metaphorical search-light, went out. Then Hysteria's native strength asserted itself once more. She seized a knife from the table. 'Go, wretch!' she cried. 'Go from the woman whose

purity you have insulted with your infamous suggestion of marriage. Away! before I plunge this knife into your false and foul waistcoat!

"The baffled curate slunk from the outraged woman whom he had thought but a moment before to make his victim. He went out of the room without another word. Shame and anger had made such a temporary French Republic in his brain that he totally forgot to help himself to the best umbrella in the umbrella-stand. An hour later he was striving to forget his disgrace in the wild excitement of croquet."

* * * *

There may be persons incapable of seeing the power and pathos of the foregoing scene, but it will appeal with irresistible force to every New Woman. The author excites, in an equal degree, our indignation at the wretch who dared to speak of marriage to the woman he professed to love, and our pity for the woman before whom this abyss of treachery and shame so suddenly opened.

It would be unfair to tell the remainder of the story. It may, however, be said that it ends in lurid gloom and brilliant sadness. Hysteria finds the world too strong for her, and she finally escapes from it by the gate of suicide. In her dying moments she sees a vision (she has poisoned herself with lobster and milk), in which a glorious world, without marriage and without men, dazzles her gaze. This transformation scene, which rivals in beauty the transformation scene of the average Christmas pantomime, ends the most remarkable book of the season. The author's fame is assured, and I confidently expect that her new religion will prove to be more popular than the most attractive of the recent religions invented by her predecessors in the path of womanly advancement.

* * * *

Complaint has sometimes been made that there is a certain sameness in Mr. Clarke Russell's delightful sea stories. It is undoubtedly true that his crews have a persistent habit of rising in mutiny, killing their captain, and compelling the hero to navigate the ship, which he finally recaptures with the aid of the heroine and a single honest sailor. But it is not the author's fault that he sometimes repeats himself. Shipwreck, fire, collision, and mutiny, are almost the only events that can happen in a sea story, and when a man has written as many sea stories as Mr. Russell has written, the wonder is not that they have a close family resemblance, but that the author has contrived to make them differ from one another to any appreciable extent. In Mr. Russell's new book, *The Good Ship "Mohock"* (Chatto & Windus), there is a mutiny, but it is a very ingenious and entirely new sort of mutiny, and it is handled in a way to make the story

an extremely interesting one. Of course the book has its weak points, for while Mr. Russell is unequalled in his painting of sea-scapes, he is not conspicuously successful in his creation of character. The passengers of the *Mohock* are, for the most part, lay figures, and the young woman who tells the story sometimes talks as a woman might be expected to talk when telling a story of the sea, while at other times she writes as no one but a sailor could write. However, it is ungracious to carp at these unimportant blemishes, and it would be hypercritical to point out that there never was a line of English clipper ships running between London and New York, or that the American liners of the period of which Mr. Russell writes carried railway iron and not gold coin from London. The story is full of incident and is admirably told, and the author cannot give us too many stories of the same sort.

Speaking of sea stories, it is strange that Herman Melville's *Redburn* should have been totally forgotten. Several of his books were recently reissued, but no publisher seems to have heard of *Redburn*. And yet it is the only novel ever written which gives a faithful picture of the fore-castle of a New York and Liverpool liner in the pre-steamer days. There is a good deal of melodramatic rubbish in the book, but there are passages which no one but a man of genius could have written.

* * * *

Genius, according to Professor Lombroso, is merely a form of insanity. He maintains that every man of genius is a lunatic. He has not as yet maintained the converse of this proposition, though one would fancy that the Professor's self-esteem would lead him to argue that every lunatic is a man of genius. I am by no means sure that both propositions are not true. The other day I was reading a miserably printed little pamphlet issued in America some twenty years ago by an undoubted lunatic. It was horribly incoherent, and I had nearly finished it without coming across a single intelligible idea, when suddenly out of the dull rubbish gleamed this allusion to death, the fear of which the writer asserted that he had totally lost. "Where once the battlements of Heaven thundered dismay, my grey gull lifts her wing against the nightfall, and takes the dim leagues with fearless eye." If lunacy can give birth to such a metaphor, what a pity it is that some of our minor poets could not go quite mad without further delay.

* * * *

A few years ago, a man who was in great mental distress, and sorely in need of wise counsel, wrote to Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes as to a father confessor. By return mail he received a letter, which I afterwards saw. The man was a total stranger to Dr. Holmes, and had no possible claim upon the latter's attention, but the kind old man, whose enfeebled condition made

writing a serious task, wrote to his unknown correspondent four pages of wise advice, warm sympathy, and hearty encouragement. Almost any other man would either have left the letter unanswered, or would have dictated to his amanuensis a few lines of cold and courteous acknowledgment. The letter was but one of the countless kind acts which characterised the long life of the "Autocrat." Dr. Holmes was a master of wit and sarcasm, but he never wrote a line that could hurt the feelings of any honest man. He was merciless in his ridicule of quacks of every sort, but for the rest of his fellow-men he had nothing but kindness. I greatly admire some of his verses, and to my mind there is more originality and power in his *Elsie Venner* than in any of the romances of Hawthorne; but the man was far more lovable than his books. Indeed, those who were admitted to his friendship were prone to underestimate the author in their love and admiration for the man; while those who did not know him personally thought of him as a brilliant wit, rather than a strong, clear-sighted man of genius. I doubt if he will ever have the place in literature which he merited, but there are those in whose memory he will live as the kindest, sweetest, and most guileless soul of the century.

* * * *

The contents of *My First Book* (Chatto & Windus), with the exception of the dainty and delicate story which Mr. Jerome contributes by way of an introduction, are already familiar to the readers of THE IDLER. The reader cannot fail to be struck by the evidence which the book affords of the curious inability of publishers to estimate aright the selling qualities of a book. There was Dr. Conan Doyle's *Micah Clarke*, which was declined by various publishers on the ground that it was not interesting. There was the *Wreck of the Grosvenor*, which had a similar experience, and was finally bought outright for fifty pounds. The book has already had a sale, in England alone, of thirty-five thousand copies. There is Mr. George Sims, who tells us that it took thirteen years of persistent effort and industry before he could succeed in getting a single article published and paid for. And Mr. Kipling, had he been cruelly disposed, might have mentioned that a great publishing house declined his *Plain Tales from the Hills*, on the ground that they lacked merit and interest. Evidently the business of publishing books as now conducted, is an extremely uncertain one, and we need not wonder at the publishers' complaint that the risks run by them are not appreciated by authors.

What the publishers ought to do is to change their method of conducting business. If they were to place in a hat the names of all manuscripts submitted to them, and to draw out a certain number for acceptance, they would probably lose less money on unsaleable books than they now lose by backing the selections made for them by "readers" who assure them that

such and such a book is "an absolute moral." There are publishers who, doubtless because of a vague recollection of the oracle of Delphi, employ a Pythoness to sit on her private tripod, and prophesy concerning manuscripts. But the Pythoness is even more untrustworthy than the male "reader," for was it not a Pythoness who saw nothing in the *Wreck of the Grosvenor* except a mere "catalogue of ship's furniture"; and was it not another Pythoness who foresaw that *Plain Tales from the Hills* would never sell? To select manuscripts for publication by drawing the names from a hat would eliminate more or less of the uncertainty which now characterises the business, and perceptibly increase the meritorious author's chances of having his manuscript accepted.

* * * *

If the publisher would recognise the fact that he now makes his living by gambling in manuscripts, and would then proceed to place his business on a sound basis by assimilating it to some such well-ordered game as roulette, or rouge et noir, he would be able to count with certainty on a handsome percentage of winnings. For example, a publisher might agree to publish any manuscript submitted to him, provided the author would pay the costs of publication, and, say, five pounds in addition. If the book did not sell the author would lose only the few pounds paid by him, and the publisher would lose nothing. If, however, the book should sell the profits of the first thousand copies should go to the publisher, and all subsequent profits to the author. The table (I should say the publisher) would make his modest five pounds on every book published by him, and would stand to win the entire profits on the first thousand copies of every successful book. The author, in case his book was a failure, would lose only his original stake, while he would stand to win largely in case his book should succeed. If the game were played in this way, neither author nor publisher would have any just cause for complaint. Under the present system each party has frequent reason for discontent. The publishers undoubtedly mean well, but their reckless "plunging" must have a demoralising effect upon them. A "bookmaker" who should conduct his business as recklessly as the publisher conducts his own, would soon, and properly, find his way to an almshouse.

* * * *

Certain Italian admirers of Shelley have recently erected a monument in his honour at Viareggio. The last generation of Italians knew no recent English poet except Byron, but to-day it is the fashion among Italian men of letters to rank Shelley as greatly the superior of Byron, not only as a poet but as a man. Years ago it was the almost unanimous opinion of Englishmen that Byron was an extremely bad man, and that Shelley, in spite

of his theological views, was almost a saint in comparison with the wicked peer. Time has brought about a truer estimate of the two men. Byron was certainly very far from being a moral man, but he was, at least, a manly man, while Shelley, especially in his treatment of women, was not merely a cad, but a particularly cruel cad. If Byron had the vices of an unrestrained man he had at least some of the manly virtues, but Shelley had the soul of a vicious woman, without heart and without conscience. The more we know of Shelley the more impossible it becomes to look upon him as an angel with one wing slightly soiled with inadvertent atheism.

There has also been a decided change in the general estimation of Dickens as a man. Formerly there was undeniably an impression that Dickens was something of an egotist, and that his life had not been, to put it mildly, an unselfish one. But the publication of Dickens' letters, and the reminiscences of those who knew him, have shown that in the whole history of English literature there has never been an eminent author who took half the pains to encourage and help young writers that Dickens habitually took. Dickens may have occasionally committed the sin of wearing waistcoats and neckties wanting in modesty of hue and pattern, but he was never guilty of the bad taste of cynicism and heartlessness.

* * * *

To pretend to be the daughter of an American millionaire, consumed with a desire to enter English society, to advertise for a chaperon, and then to make "copy" out of the letters received in answer to the advertisement, is one of the most recent methods of book-making. The plan is capable of almost indefinite extension. A writer might profess to be in great spiritual distress, and, by writing for counsel and sympathy to various clergymen, might obtain a large number of letters capable of being served up with humorous and sarcastic comments. Or, again, the writer might obtain a situation as nurse to some distinguished patient, and then publish a full account of the patient's most private symptoms. Or, what would perhaps be still more entertaining, the writer might, if she were a woman, induce some respectable middle-aged gentleman to fall in love with her, and to write love letters which would make the most readable of "copy." If a volume thus prepared were to be illustrated with photographs of the lover secretly taken with the help of an instantaneous camera, the interest of the book would be heightened. It is evident that there are great possibilities in this new field of literature, and we ought to be especially grateful to the author who has been the first to discover and cultivate it. A book made up of information surreptitiously obtained from unsuspecting people would be read in nearly every kitchen in the land.



"AM I ALL RIGHT NOW?"

Not Practical.

BY ANTHONY HOPE.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY HAL HURST.

I HAD never been nearer doing it in all my life. In fact, I was just about to do it when young Stevenage hove in sight.

"I rather like Lord Stevenage, don't you?" said Lady Amy.

"He's not a bad chap," said I.

"Only," observed Lady Amy, "he's so poor, poor boy."

"So what?" I cried.

"I don't suppose," said she, impressively, "that what with the fall of rents and so on, he can have more than five thousand a year."

I looked at Lady Amy. Then I remarked, with a touch of satire:

"Unhappy devil!"

The satire did not reach Lady Amy.

"Yes," said she, "it's horrid for him; but he may get a little bit more when his aunt dies."

There was a thoughtful, speculative look in Lady Amy's eye. That look is familiar to me.

"My aunt is dead," said I, proudly. "And she left me——"

"But it won't be more than two or three thousand," pursued Lady Amy, sadly.

"Not a bit more," said I. (It was two or three hundred really.)

"Still it would just help," said Lady Amy; and she bowed most graciously to Stevenage.

Matters standing thus, I thought I would do it after all. It would relieve my feelings (for she was looking atrociously pretty); it might also be healthy for Lady Amy.

"One mustn't think of money," said I.

"Of course, one oughtn't to think too much of it," agreed Lady Amy.

"If I loved a girl," said I, "the fact of her only having a thousand or two a year would not stop me."

"Wouldn't it indeed, Mr. Vansittart?"

"Not it," said I. "We must think of the heart, Amy."

"Mr. Vansittart!"

"I said, we must think of the heart."

"But you—you—you——"

"Oh, I meant it," said I, quickly.

"But you called me——"



"THERE WAS A THOUGHTFUL, SPECULATIVE LOOK IN LADY AMY'S EYE."

very curious to-night, Mr. Vansittart."

"Of upwards of three hundred a year. It shall all be yours—every farthing."

"Three hundred a year?" and Lady Amy began to laugh.

"And," I added, "a love such as——"

"Please, Mr. Vansittart! Surely you must see that—Oh, it's absurd, it really is! Oh, what are you doing?"

"By the sweetest name in the world!" I cried.

"Myname is Dick."

"I don't care a bit what your name is," said Lady Amy.

"Nor I what yours is," said I.

"Names, forsooth! I once knew a perfectly charming girl named——"

"What *has* that got to do with it, Mr. Vansittart?"

It had nothing to do with it. I resumed my declaration.

"I've loved you for years, Amy," said I. "But I have toiled in silence till I have amassed—thanks to the death of my aunt—a suitable sum——"

"I think you're

"I was taking your hand," said I.

"Well, but you mustn't; because it's quite impossible, and absurd, and—there, you've held it quite long enough now. I'm very sorry, really I am, Mr. Vansittart, but——"

"Sorry? What are you sorry for, Amy?"

"Now you mustn't call me——"

"I do believe," I cried, "that you're going to refuse me!"

"Certainly I am," said Lady Amy.

"I never heard of such a thing in my life," said I, indignantly.

Lady Amy looked at me. I had never quite known how much (or how little) I loved Lady Amy. The question, you see, was really not a practical one; but I think I looked as if I loved her a good deal, for she said, with a perplexed little laugh:

"How silly you are! Because we were *such* good friends, Mr. Vansittart."

"Your heart is softening," I observed. "You like me very much, really."

"I should really just like to hear what mamma would say!" said Lady Amy.

"You shall enjoy the pleasure in ten minutes," I promised her, preparing to rise.

"Oh, Mr. Vansittart, please! Oh, no, please! Oh, please, sit still! I—I didn't mean anything of the kind. It is absolutely out of the question. Besides, I don't—don't care for you, you know."

"That's a mere afterthought," said I, severely.

"And even if I did——"

"And even though you do——?"

"Oh, dear me, what's the use of talking about it? If I liked you ever so much, it would be——"

"Only half as much as I like you," said I. I was quite interested in the thing by now.

"Oh, Mr. Vansittart, this is most painful——"

"Painful?" I cried.

"Why, of course. When I like you so much as a——!"

"Well, I suppose it is painful in a way," I conceded, reluctantly.

"But I shall always like to remember that you paid me the——"

"You oughtn't to like to remember it, you know."

"I suppose I oughtn't, but— Sometimes I think it's a horrid world, don't you, Mr. Vansittart? Oh, be careful! There's Lord—I mean, there's somebody coming."

"It's nothing to me who's coming," said I. "I am only being refused—and if I don't mind, why should you?"

Then Lady Amy said in a curious tone—quite low, you know, and not quite steady, and—oh, hang it, I can't describe it—

"You mustn't be unkind to me, Mr. Vansittart."

I looked at Lady Amy. My cousin Flo never allows that she was pretty. Well, I don't know.

"It is rather a beast of a world," said I.

"I just shouldn't *dare*," said Lady Amy.

"I was an infernal brute ever to——"

"Oh, no, you weren't. I—I didn't mind it—much, you know. But you must have known it was absurd, mustn't you?"

"I knew it," said I, gloomily, "till half-way through."

"Then you forgot it?" she asked, lifting her lashes for an instant.

"Yes—clean," said I.

A pause followed. Then Lady Amy gave another little laugh, and said: "Heigho! I—I nearly forgot it too. Shall we go back to the room?" (We had been upon the stairs.)

"I suppose we'd better," said I, rising.

"In a minute," said Lady Amy; and she took a little lace spider's web, and delicately—— "Am I all right now?" she asked.

"No one would ever suspect it," said I, giving her my arm.

She took it, and we set out. Just as we reached the door of the room, I felt a sudden little pressure on my arm, and a sudden grip of slim fingers; and a voice said in my ear:

"It was rather dear of you to forget, Dick."

And before I could answer—for just at first I couldn't answer—Lady Amy was gone, and I drifted alone across the room till I found myself opposite the Marchioness.

"Oh, Mr. Vansittart, have you seen my daughter? I've been looking for her everywhere, and Lord Stevenage has been helping me, but we can't find her."

"I lost sight of her only a minute ago," said I.

"What can she have been doing?" asked the Marchioness.

"Oh, she's been all right," said I, reassuringly.

"I want to introduce Mr. Br——. Oh, why, there she is



"IT WAS RATHER DEAR OF YOU TO FORGET, DICK."

now with Mr. Brampton. Thank you, Mr. Vansittart;" and the Marchioness, having no more need of me, moved on.

I looked and beheld her with Mr. Brampton. She sat down with Mr. Brampton. Brampton is a decent enough fellow, and he is supposed to have five hundred pounds a day. After I had looked (from round a corner) as long as I wanted, I went and



"OH, THERE SHE IS NOW!"

got my coat. It chanced that Stevenage was getting his coat, and we walked off together, smoking our cigars. Suddenly Stevenage observed :

"Thought Lady Amy looking well to-night, didn't you?"

"Deuced," said I, licking the stump of my cigar.

"I say, who's that chap Brampton?"

"Oh, he's got a pile," said I.

Stevenage stopped short in the middle of the pavement.

"Hang the fellow!" said he—and walked on again.

"He's just as good a fellow as most," said I.

"Oh, it's all very well for you," he broke out. "Look here, Vansittart, you're a good sort. I don't mind telling you. I wish I wasn't so confoundedly poor."

I took Lord Stevenage's arm. I felt very friendly towards him.

"That's what's the matter, is it?" I asked.

"Of course the old lady—well, you know the old lady! I was well enough till Brampton came along, don't you know?"

I pressed his arm sympathetically.

"And I tell you what, Van, I believe that if it wasn't for the beastly money, Lady Amy would have——"

"Upon my word," I cried suddenly. "I believe she would!"

"You noticed something in her manner?" he said, eagerly.

"Rather—a lot," said I.



"IT CHANCED THAT STEVENAGE WAS GETTING HIS COAT."

"Isn't it infernal?" he asked.

"It's as infernal as they make it," I agreed.

It happened that at this point we came opposite my club. I took Stevenage in and we had some brandy and soda-water. Stevenage drank his at a gulp, and observed:

"The poor girl daren't do as she likes, you see."

"No; if she did——" said I, gazing at the smoke-rings.

"If she did——" said Stevenage, leaning forward.

"Upon my honour, I believe she would have——" But I stopped abruptly.

Yet something caught Stevenage's eye, for he said:

"By the way, you had a good long sitting with her on those stairs."

"Oh, that was nothing," said I, modestly.

"You seemed to find a lot to say, though," he remarked.

I leant forward in my turn, and laid my hand on Stevenage's knee.

"I was only," said I, "asking her to marry me."

Stevenage started most violently.

"What!" he cried.

"I was only," I repeated, "offering my hand to her."

"You were offering your hand to Lady Amy?"

"Well, my dear fellow, haven't I told you so twice already? Oh, don't be uneasy. You can fight it out with Brampton. She refused me."

But Stevenage finished his brandy and soda-water, threw away his cigar, rose, put on his hat, buttoned up his coat, and, thus equipped, stood staring at me for a minute.

"Well, that is a good 'un," said he.

I believe he still tells the story—as an example of impudence—but he doesn't tell it all; and he still thinks himself very ill-used by Lady Amy Brampton. Ah, well, she was a charming girl.

Her Majesty's Mail.

BY FRANK FELLER.





"IN THE DINING-ROOM AT THE GRANGE."

Stories of Famous Men.

I.—THE BOYHOOD OF HENRY IRVING.

BY JOSEPH HATTON.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY W. N. MARGETSON.



"PORCH AT THE GRANGE."

material, and scatter it here and there in casual contributions to theatrical literature, by way of tribute to the genius of the greatest actor-manager of our time, probably the greatest of any time.

Quite a number of authors have tried their hands upon the story of Henry Irving's life and work. My friend, Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, has written the latest book on the subject. As a careful and critical record of the Lyceum management, it is a notable contribution to the history of the stage, written with

HERE is often in men's lives some particular thing which they are always going to do but never achieve. Was it not the hinge of a certain door that Tristram Shandy was always going to grease but let it creak on to the end? Benjamin Webster told me that he went on the stage as a boy fired by an ambition to play "Pizarro." He bought a sword for the part, but never played it. For a number of years, at odd times, I have made notes for a "Life of Henry Irving," or, at least, a book of reminiscences of the famous actor. I shall probably never write either the one or the other. Once in a way, mostly tempted by love of the subject, I look over my

knowledge and with sympathy. I have thought sometimes that I would, at least, prepare a volume of "Talks with Irving," passages of conversation, reminiscences of chimney-corner gossip, and incidents of travel. Meanwhile, says THE IDLER, why not give us a chapter of the unwritten book in a series of stories of famous men? Why not?

When I had that prospective volume more in my mind than usual, Irving talked with me about his birth-place.

"I was born, as you know," he said, "at Keinton, near Glastonbury. My biographers, at least some of them, prefer to say I was born at Glastonbury, as if to get in a graphic reference to the staff of Arimathea, which, according to tradition, took root there, and blossomed at Christmas. But the place was Keinton. I hope I don't do it an injustice, but it seems to me a God-forsaken little village. My memory of it is an infantile one. I left it when I was about four, I suppose; and I could not have been more than three when the incident occurred that is implanted in my mind as the chief thing I remember about Keinton. I used to toddle into a neighbour's farm. His name was Hoddy. One day I was attacked by some sheep, more particularly by a ram. I was a good deal knocked about by the brute with horns. The occurrence is in my mind even now as a dreadful memory.

"I did not see Keinton again until some years ago."

It was in 1888, by the way, when this talk took place, and by the fire at Brook Green.

"When I went to Keinton with the Batemans, I had an idea that I should remember the place thoroughly; but when I got there it was quite strange to me. It was altogether a different place from what I thought; not at all like the picture I had in my mind. Furthermore, I could not remember the name of the farmer in whose meadow I had come to grief with the sheep. I fancied, however, that I should remember it if I saw it, so I went into the churchyard, and after a little time I stumbled on it—Hoddy. I looked about for the house where I had lived, but could not recall it. At last I came to a house that I felt I knew. I went in and asked questions. They said no one had lived in it by the name of Brodribb. They named several dead and gone who had lived in it. At last they mentioned Hoddy. It was a family of two or three generations back, they said. Then they fixed the date, and it turned out to be the house of the farmer to whom the sheep belonged. My visit to Keinton did

not change the impression that memory had left of it in my mind.

"First impressions cling, do they not? In my early days I accepted a stock engagement at a provincial theatre, and did not know until I got there that I had been put into the place of an actor who was locally very popular.

He had not left, I believe, on altogether good terms with the management. So the audience vented their spleen upon his successor. I was that unfortunate person, and for a whole week or more I was hissed every night. Not



"THE HOUSE WHERE MR. IRVING WAS BORN."

for my bad acting" (he said this with a pleasant smile), "but out of love for my predecessor. I remember how, every night, I walked to my rooms, some two miles out of town, very wretched, and walked in again the next night no less miserable.

To this day I never pass the place by railway without a shudder. I become depressed the moment the familiar little stations close by begin to show themselves. What a delightful thing by way of contrast pleasurable impressions are ! But we were talking about the days when I was a child.

“ My mother, lovable, devoted, a woman of fine feeling, and whose affections were self-sacrificing, was anxious that I should be brought up in the invigorating air of Cornwall, where she was born. Her maiden name was Behenna ; my father’s, Brodribb, as you know. My mother had a sister in Cornwall, who had married a locally-famous mining captain, one Penberthy. His name is still well-known round about St. Ives. He was an adventurous, strong character, Cornish to the backbone. He had worked in Mexico—the mine was the *Rel del Monte*, near Vera Cruz. He carried it to a high pitch of prosperity, and then went home to Cornwall to marry my aunt, and take charge of four extensive Cornish mines. They had two boys and a girl when my mother took me to Halestown, where they lived, and left me with my aunt while she joined my father, first in Bristol and then in London. It was a wonderful district, Halestown ; wild, beautiful, strange, and there could be no doubt about its fresh air, and the wisdom of my dear, good mother in giving me the advantage of breathing it, to the benefit of my health and strength. At first I was miserable enough, parted with my mother as if my heart were breaking, but did not show half I felt, nor she either ; but it was the right thing. At the time I speak of, Captain Penberthy, my aunt’s husband, was an Inspector of Mines ; a remarkable man, a giant. My aunt, you know, is still living, a grand old lady. I remember that, with the other children, I used to go and meet my uncle at the mine. He would be underground one week, and the next week above. When he was underground all day, he would come home in the evening ; as I say, we went to meet him. I was a little afraid of him. I think he liked me. He fondled me in a rough kind of way, like a bear with a cub. We used to see him a long way off, with his big arms open to welcome us. I rushed into his arms with the rest, but still I was a little afraid.”

Then, breaking off to emphasise what he was about to say next, Irving lifted up his head and looked at me as if he would challenge controversy—a defiant kind of manner which comes to him occasionally when he gives expression to something that he feels deeply.



"HIS BIG ARMS OPEN TO WELCOME US."

"If ever there was a born queen," he said, "it is my aunt, a temperance Methodist; the sort of woman who, in her simple, grand way, walks with God. She came to London not long

since. I took her to see the Baroness Burdett Coutts, when the Baroness's friend, Mrs. Brown, was alive. My aunt was the aristocrat of the meeting ; she was the queen—she had a simple, grand air of superiority ; rather looked down, I dare say, upon what she would consider the worldly woman of London. A fine woman, a rigid teetotaller ; but a woman of common sense. She looked wonderfully well, and was, indeed, in capital health. ' Oh, yes,' she said, ' I am very well, indeed ; and on these long journeys I carry with me a small flask of brandy, and take a little ; the travelling fatigues me, and I find the brandy gives me life. It is the elixir vitæ !' Fine, was it not ? Here is a woman strong enough all her life to be teetotal, yet sensible enough to take a little alcohol as a medicine."

It was a lovely old room in which we had this after-dinner chat. I was visiting Irving at Brook Green. The dining-room might have been a simple Lyceum set, in which the artist has striven to represent an unostentatious interior with all the picturesqueness of the old days, and all the luxurious conveniences of the new. The dark oak sideboard and overmantel-piece, the soft Turkey carpet, the brass dogs in the fender, and the white shining glass on the polished table, are incidents that I recall with the pleasurable memories to which they belong ; and outside, every now and then, in the distance, the bay of one of my host's favourite hounds. We might have been miles away in Irving's favourite Cornwall, for any sound there was to interrupt us.

The time was winter, and there was holly mixed up with the picture-frames on the walls, and red berries glistening in the fire-light. It was called "The Grange," and it might have been a picturesque relic of the time when Christmas was universally celebrated with wassail and yule log, and great feasts, so successfully had the architect transformed a simple cottage, with suggestions of a Georgian history, into the semblance of an ancient manor-house. It had all the characteristics of "the good old days," with modern combinations of art and utility in furniture and decoration. A wing was added to each side of the main and older portion of the original house, outer offices and a lodge erected, and a new entrance hall constructed, the porch of which stands for the initial letter of this article. A garden of several acres gave to the place a country atmosphere, and afforded an example of the region around Hammersmith before the advent of railways. It had been a labour of love to reconstruct and furnish "The

Grange." No new play had ever received half the solicitous care and personal attention. It was the actor's recreation to stage-manage this very real and beautiful scene, to make it a home of "English peace," and luxurious ease. On summer days there were hammocks in the garden amidst old-fashioned flowers. In the autumn there were bushels of fruit, not forgetting a superb mulberry tree, its branches loaded with luscious berries. Winter brought roaring fires of wood, reflected in polished floors. In the quaint dining-room there were shaded lamps, and rich rugs and carpets, and, above all, that air of comfort which bespeaks the generous host. "The Grange," however, proved, after all, an impossible possession to a busy man, who, during most of his life had lived in chambers, and had no leisure for old manor-houses and gardens, and guest rooms, and housekeeping. So, after a year or two, Irving returned to Grafton Street, and gave back to the theatre the time he had hoped to spend at Brook Green; and "The Grange" only remains a pleasant memory of "dreams, idle dreams." But that is another story, so let us take up the thread of the one we have dropped.

"Well, now, about my Aunt Penberthy's character, and the way she lived with her husband. They never quarrelled; they were always happy. She was always cheerful; but one day, when she was out, he came home from the mine offended at something there or at home, and, to our amazement, walked into the kitchen where we youngsters were, and began to smash everything he could lay his hands on. He took up the chairs and broke them across his knee, and they were pretty strong too, nothing, however, to him; he snapped them as if they had been the merest sticks. Drawers, tables, he smashed everything; then walked out and went back to the mine. We were all terrified while this was going on. As for me, I got behind the door or anywhere else out of his way. It was a fine old Cornish kitchen, ingle nook, great oak beams, bacon and hams hanging on the beams, a regular farmer-like country kitchen. When he was gone, we breathed again and no longer feared. We simply waited for the queen's return; only wondering what she would say. In the evening we went to meet him as usual, my aunt with us. There he was coming along, as before, with his great wide arms and in the same flannel costume; the very self-same giant of the day before. We gave him the same old greeting; he received us in the same old hearty way. My aunt and he walked together in their customary manner, she leaning



"GAVE A GREAT BURST OF LAUGHTER."

on one arm, he putting the other great arm round her waist—a big hearty giant of a fellow. When we got home he paused at the open doorway of the kitchen, flung back his chest, and gave forth a great burst of laughter. You never heard such a

laugh, it was tremendous. My aunt laughed, too. What do you think he laughed at? The wreck of the furniture had been got together and displayed by my aunt, as if the whole business was a huge joke. Broken chairs, table-legs, a cupboard door, pieces of an old seat, all manner of things were hung upon the walls, as if they were pictures, articles of vertu, bric-à-brac. And this was all that occurred. There was no scene; only the laughter. During the next day or two the place was put to rights, and never for a moment did the affair disturb the happiness of the household; she knew how to live with her husband, and he loved her in his big devil-may-care kind of way. I look back with intense admiration on them both, but with reverence and respect for her."

Turning over my notes at this period, I find a reference to "Shirley." It is a memorandum of my own. It was not mentioned by Irving. I question if he has read the book, but he related an incident of Halestown with a mixture of admiration, tempered, as it seemed to me, so much with apology, that one day I asked him if there would be any impropriety in printing the story. "None, whatever," he said, "I think it a fine illustration of a fine woman's character." I remembered afterwards a page of fiction that was not unlike it, so true is fiction in the hands of the great writer. You remember the chapter where it is said the mistress had never called a servant in so peremptory a tone as she called Mrs. Gill to send relief to Mr. Moore at the mill, save once before, and that was when she had seen from the window Tartar in full tug with two carriers' dogs, each of them a match for him in size, if not in courage, and their masters standing by encouraging their animals, while her's was unbefriended. Then, indeed, she had summoned John as if the Day of Judgment were at hand, nor had she waited for the said John's coming, but had walked out into the lane bonnetless, and informing the carriers that she held them far less of men than the three brutes whirling and worrying in the dust before them, had put her hands round the neck of the largest of the curs and given her whole strength to the essay of choking it from Tartar's torn and bleeding eye, just above and below which organ the vengeful fangs were inserted. Five or six men were presently on the spot to help her, but she never thanked one of them. "They might have come before if their will had been good." Then you know how she spent the remainder of the day, sitting by the fire and tending the scared old canine warrior.

A similar combination of courage and tenderness is characteristic of Mrs. Penberthy in the stories Irving tells of her. She has many of the "Shirley" peculiarities, and something of the same intellectual breadth of mind. The truth of the incident I am about to repeat from Irving's lips, is more dramatic than that of the famous Brontë fiction, and it is one of sundry Cornish incidents that must have greatly influenced the boy's future life and work. Indeed, one traces in his idiosyncrasies the results of an intense admiration of the character of his aunt. Her patience, courage, independence of thought and steadfast faith, were stamped upon the young mind never to be effaced.

One would not, perhaps, be inclined to dwell upon these early impressions, and the power of a lad's environment in controlling his future, if Irving were simply a mere actor; but he is so much more than a mere actor that one finds a certain fascination in looking back into his first years for the lessons and examples that have helped to make him what he is, a man of tremendous personal force, of varied reading and emotions; strong passions, possessing the great capacity of working and waiting; an artist with a keen sense of colour and the grouping of figures; a poet in his high appreciation of the noblest fancy; a subtle interpreter of the finest feeling; a man of affairs, full of charity; and underlying all this an imagination peculiarly receptive of the sombre and the tragic. Educated among the rugged scenes of a mining district, brought up in a family of a strong individuality, with such an aunt and uncle as we have seen, not to mention a fanatical relative not unlike what a professedly religious Granny Dixon, in "Howarths," might have been, the imagination of the future actor must have been greatly influenced in the direction of the weird, hence his first study for recitation was "The Uncle," and his two greatest melodramatic performances, "The Bells" and "Louis the Eleventh."

Well, this was Irving's story:—

"Now I am going to tell you something about her that may shock you, may perhaps give you what you will consider a less admirable view of her character than that I have claimed for her; but I think it fine, and, at the same time, it is eminently characteristic of the woman. We were out walking, she and I and her children. We came to a rather high bank; it sloped down sharply upon the path. We had a little harmless dog with us. Two men at the top of this bank had with them a sort of mongrel bull-terrier, an ugly, vicious-looking brute; the men

began to set their dog on ours. My aunt remonstrated; they only laughed, and urged on their brute. It came lurching down the bank, half-crawling down, towards our dog, and then suddenly pounced upon it, and gripped it by the back of the neck. "Call your dog off!" said my aunt, while we children yelled and screamed and clung to our pet, trying to get the poor wretch away from its assailant, which was gradually strangling it. The men grinned, but did not call their dog off; they enjoyed seeing our poor little beast worried. My aunt half-walked, half-ran, round a little pond that I well remember, and went into a farmer's house, and came out again with a large pair of shears, the kind they use for cutting grass or trimming hedges. She went up to the two dogs, and thrust the shears straight into the bull terrier, which almost the next moment released our dog and rolled over dead. I only spoke about this affair the last time I saw my aunt—that time she came to London. She said there was a great fuss about her killing the dog, and the ill-feeling went on for a long time after. She was a most gentle and humane creature; but she stabbed that dog with the firm determination of a virago, egged on, of course, by the sufferings of her own weaker little animal, and by our cries of pain and terror."

If Irving had not become an actor, he would have rivalled his namesake of America. The at-

mosphere in which he was brought up was of the kind that breeds imaginative people. The time, too, was sympathetic towards the poet and the story-teller. The books that were to be found in the scanty libraries of country houses and middle-class homes were such as give the fancy wings for imaginative excursions: the Bible, "Pilgrim's Progress," "Don Quixote," "Shakespeare's Plays," stray ballads of the time, and "Old Songs of the Border."



"SET THEIR DOG
ON OURS."



"A HIDEOUS MASQUERADE OF HORNS AND TAILS."

This was the class of literature that was common, and a step higher among studious folk, "Milton's Paradise Lost" would be considered necessary. What Sir Walter Raleigh had for inspiration in the shape of real mariners returning home from wondrous adventures, Irving had in books and ballads, in stories of ghosts and fanatical fears of the devil.

I remember him telling me of that same warlock-like Granny Dixon. She was a tyrant to the children, and of a most stern religion, that had brimstone in it and constant threats of hell-fire. He and one of his cousins who had suffered from her persecution, surprised her one night in a hideous masquerade of horns and tails, and would not quit her until she had prayed that Heaven would forgive her all her sins, especially those she had committed against the children.

There were stormy winter nights, loving Spring days and luscious summer thick with flowers, and the mystery of the sea not far away to educate the youthful romancist. Before he went to London the boy lived for some time with his parents in Bristol, and one of his keenest remembrances of the grand old Western city is connected with a murder that was full of tragic incident calculated to stimulate his love of the weird and the gloomy, to be called upon later when he became a man, and poured his soul into the poetic creations of Shakespeare.

From the West of England he was sent to school in London, where he soon learned to love the great mysterious city, and find out its strange holes and corners, its side-shows, its cheap theatres, and its infinite variety. In those days he indulged in athletic exercises, was an expert swimmer, fond of back streets and slums, as he is now, a prowler in queer places. From the first time that he knew anything about the



"FOUND HIMSELF SITTING
AT A DESK."

stage he loved it. Before he left school he had partly made up his mind to be an actor. When he found himself sitting at a desk to begin life as a clerk, he resolved that nothing should prevent him from going upon the stage; and two worlds, the Old and the New, are glad that he had the courage of his ambition.

It will be interesting to mention that, in the autumn of 1883, Irving asked me to lunch at the Garrick to meet an old friend of his. He introduced me to a tall, well-built man with the manner and appearance of a traveller. He had lightish hair, his complexion was rather florid, and he wore a beard and moustache, and imperial or "goatee"—something after the American fashion.

"This is my cousin, Captain Penberthy," said Irving. "You will remember me telling you all about his father."

My fellow-guest spoke with just a suggestion of a West of England dialect, was self-possessed, and looked his relationship to the Cornishman who managed the mines round about St. Ives, in the young days of Henry Irving, his wife's nephew. This other Captain Penberthy remarked, as we sat with our feet under the Garrick mahogany, that he and Irving left home at about the same time to begin their careers. Like his progenitor, Penberthy went off on a mining expedition to Mexico. He had been in that country for something like seventeen years, and had recently retired from the management of a very extensive silver-mine in Texas. He was now on his way to the Argentine Republic, and had looked in at the Lyceum Theatre to see the friend of his boyhood act, and very much astonished and delighted he had been. It all seemed very strange to him when he looked back to the time when they lived together at Halestown.

Irving has an easy, genial way of making a man talk when he knows that his guest will have something to say that is worth hearing. He drew his cousin out without any difficulty and was deeply interested, as I was, in the mining captain's conversation, wherein he spoke of most disastrous chances, of moving accidents by flood and field, of hairbreadth escapes, not in the mines alone, but in scenes of civic strife and revolution.

"Mexico is even a wilder country than Cornwall?" Irving remarked, interrogatively.

"Why, yes," said the mining captain, with a genial smile; "I carried my life in my hands there eleven years ago. So rapid

were the changes of Government in those days, that when we went down the mine in the morning, we did not know what régime we should be living under when we came up at night. We had to be very careful how we spoke of men and things until we had found out where we stood, and to whom we owed allegiance."

"We don't change our bill at the Lyceum as often as that," said Irving.

"I assure you I am not exaggerating," Penberthy replied.

"Why should you?" said Irving. "Mining in Mexico and Texas must be sufficiently exciting without drawing the long bow. Why, I remember there were sensational events round about Halestown even when we were lads."

"Oh, yes," Penberthy replied, with a smile; "but they don't match with things that can happen to a man in Mexico."

Whereupon he related several instances in point, with a quiet, dramatic touch, not altogether unworthy of his more famous relative.

Then he gave us an account of the various decorative uses of the "Mexican Bug," as the Americans designate a fat little phosphorescent insect, specimens of which I, myself, once brought from the United States, whither they had been imported by a traveller whom I met on an ocean steamer.

"The Mexican women," continued Penberthy, "are very beautiful. They wear these insects arranged as necklets, but mostly in their hair. A woman entering a room in an evening, when the lights are low—the effect is wonderful—the woman's head seeming to swim in a kind of halo; it would be a fine effect on the stage."

"No doubt," said Irving, "you must have seen many things that would give one a hint for the Lyceum."

"Well, I dare say," replied Penberthy, not quite sure of his ground; he had seen so much at the Lyceum beyond anything he had ever dreamt of in Mexico; and, moreover, Irving was looking at him with an inquiring twinkle under his bushy eyebrows that might mean anything, even an intention to unduly draw out his unsophisticated, if much travelled, cousin.

"Have you made any record of your experiences?" Irving asked.

"I have kept a diary all my life."

"All your life?" said Irving.

"It is at the present moment in twenty volumes," said the cousin, enjoying Irving's astonishment.

"You amaze me! And what are you going to do with it?"

"I shall leave it behind me when I die," he said, adding, with a deprecatory shrug of his broad shoulders, "I don't think my executors will make anything interesting of it."

"Hatton would," said Irving.

My answer to the note of interrogation that pointed this remark, was an expression of regret that I had not kept a diary all my life, followed by an inquiry touching the general character of Penberthy's twenty volumes.

"Full of personal incidents, some business, some pleasure," said the mining captain; "some notes of observations of men and manners, and bits of natural history."

Then Irving asked for a few special examples of these varied records, and Penberthy gave us several that were strange and interesting; and so we passed the afternoon until it was time for Irving to go to the theatre. Penberthy went with him.

"Oh, yes," he said, in reply to a question Irving put to him in the hall of the Club; "I have been every night to



"HAD PLAYED TOGETHER AS CHILDREN."

see you. No, I don't get tired, it is all so wonderful when I think of you at Halestown."

"Our steps lay in very different directions when we started on our careers. Yes, that is so, very odd thing life, eh?" Irving laid his hand on his cousin's arm as he spoke, "and who would have thought of your growing up to have such splendid adventures, eh?"

"Oh, but they are nothing to what you've done," said Penberthy.

I left them at the corner of the street, and watched them until they turned into Covent Garden, the two tall fellows who had played together as children among the Cornish hills, to part as lads each on such strangely different paths, and to meet again where everybody meets everybody else, sooner or later, in the world's metropolis.





"THAT'S MY 'USBAND!'"

“Drove Back.”

BY CLARK RUSSELL.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE HUTCHINSON.

IT was in that voyage that I took in the *Empire* that I made up my mind to knock off the sea. We was homeward bound from Adelaide, and I was keeping a look-out one black night on the fok'sle, when, there coming a yelling spit of soaking blast slap into my face, I lifts up my fist and brings it down on the rail. For more than twenty year had I used the sea, and what was it come to? An old chest, two or three shifts of rags, a pair of sea-boots, and, s'help me, no more. Through the improvidence of the sailor? By thunder, then, no! What's providence got to do with such a withered life as the ocean? Saving means getting, and where in niggers is the getting to be found where it's all living hard, faring hard, dying hard, and going to Hell arter all?

Beef ye could chisel into snatch-blocks; pork too foul to grease your boots with; kicks and curses aft; wet and famine forrards—is it good enough? With a fok'sle so full of fired Dutchmen—why, when they hoist the English red ensign, the flag's the bitterest lie since Anny-nius and Sophia.

But how was I to get a living ashore? That was the question that occupied my attention when I walked them decks in solitude. I'd say to my mates, “What 'ud *you* do if you knocked off?” and some was for going to sea again, and the rest was for the work'us. I'd seen so little of life ashore that I couldn't guess how men got their livings. What was a merchant? He was a covey who traded. What was a clerk? He was a covey who sat on a stool and wrote in a book. No use of my laying a course for the likes of that. My taste went to the country, deep inland. I fancied I'd like to get a job under a



“WHAT WAS IT
COME TO?”

market gardener. I'd feel pleased when I thought of reaping wheat and cutting down grass, of going home at sundown on top of a wagon-load of hay, the air sweet as nuts, and sitting down to a burstin' blow-out of ale 'and roasted apples, and bread and cheese. "Go away, salt water!" I'd think then.

I was about thirty-five years old, and looked forty-five; Lobscouse'll serve yer measlier than weather. They say a weak heart paints the nose blue, which colours the spirits. Soup an' bully's worse than a decayed vital, and if yer leave yer teeth in the mess-kid, how many spoonfuls of pease-soup do it take to raise a wrinkle?

The ship duly arrived, and I, along with the rest, was paid off. There was twenty-two months' wages to take up, so I had scope to ride by. I took a lodging at 2, Bromley Street, Commercial Road, and spent two pound in a land-going rig-out. Then I was at a loss. The name of the landlady was Mrs. Bloomer, and her husband was a waterman. Meeting her one day in the passage as I was going to take a turn to look about me:

"I should like," I says, "to have a short yarn with you, Missis, if you've got a minute."

"Certainly, sir," she answers.

"Don't *sir* me, I beg," says I. "*I'm* no dog."

She steps me into a bit of a parlour, close with careful keeping. There was a little looking-glass over the mantel-shelf, bound in yaller gauze, with oyster shells for occasional ornaments, and a glass case, with a stuffed bird, in the front window.

"Can I sit?" says I.

"Why, yes," says she, smiling. "It can't hurt yer."

I put down my cap, and took a chair, and says, "Mrs. Bloomer, I've been a sailorman all my life, and have come ashore to find a job, meaning to *stop* ashore. I've got a few pounds, and can hold out for some time, and I want you to tell me how I ought to go to work."

"What's your age?" says she, looking me over.

I told her.

"There's a many situations a-going," says she, "and a handy man ought never to want for a job. Why not turn waterman?"

"No more water for me," says I.

"Light porter," says she.

Thought she meant something to drink.

"Can you drive a 'orse?"

"I don't fancy driving," says I.

"Look 'ere, Mr. Pooley," says she. "Your chance'll lie in advertising. Write out a little piece for the papers. It'll cost yer about three or four shillings to put in. Answers'll come, and you can pick and choose."

I allowed this to be up to the knocker, and in that same room she and me made out this advertisement:—

"A sailorman wants a job. He is an all-round hand, useful anywhere and any time, being accustomed to a calling that runs a day's work into twenty-four hours, and pays no overtime wages. Address William Pooley, 2, Bromley Street, Commercial Road, E."

When Bloomer came home that night he recommended me to put the piece into the paper which says it has the largest circulation in the world. This I did next day. Forget the cost. Valuing it in pints of beer, call it four gallons. I'm a slow hand at reading, and it took me a smothered long time to spell through the advertisements on the day when the piece I had wrote was to appear. At last, down in a corner, I spies my name.

"Who's a-going to see this?" says I to Mrs. Bloomer, putting my finger upon it.

"It do look insignificant, certainly," said she.

"Who the blooming blazes is a-going to see it?" says I, a-bringing down my fist.

"Yer never can tell," says Mrs. Bloomer.

I went out for a turn that afternoon, and sat for a spell with an old shipmate that had brought up in the Home, in Well Street. He had said to me:

"You'll never get rid of it, Bill. O'er an' o'er I've been a-giving of it up. Six times have I been a-running, and I've tried my hand as barber, dorg-fancyin', and wheel-chairman. All no go," says he. "Here I am, three weeks ashore from Jamaica, and now I'm a-looking for another ship. They don't want sailors on dry land. Yer'll be drove back to it."



"I WAS AT A LOSS."

When I returned to my lodging I found a letter addressed to Mr. William Pooley.

"Blistered if it ain't been seen arter all," said I, grinning like a fool.

I opens the letter, and, going to the window, holds it out and reads it. It was from a gent, saying he had seen my advertisement, and was willing to give me a job ; but I must invest some money along with him. Mrs. Bloomer said that I must look to get a number of letters of that sort. They was all



"SAT FOR A SPELL WITH AN OLD SHIPMATE."

thieves who wrote 'em, and I was to take no notice. She tore the letter up, fearing that I might be tempted to call upon the old covey.

Well, after that letter I heard no more. Who was a-going to see my name down in that there corner? I looked round at the office four days after the notice had appeared, and says to a clerk, "Considering," I says, "the cost I've been put to, I'm surprised," says I, "not to have got any answers."

"Put it in again," says he.

"Down in that corner!" says I. "What's yer charge for half of one of them pages of yourn with that there notice printed big, right amidships of the white?"

"We don't do business in that sort of way," says he. "If we did, the cost 'ud keep yer to wind'ard of jobs for the rest of yer shining days."

When I got to the lodging that afternoon, Mrs. Bloomer told me a party had called to see me.

"Something in the job line?" says I.

"I can't say, I'm sure," says she, and I thought that her manner was changed. She had a sort of cast in her eyes, and looked at the wall past my head, though she was a-staring hard at me, taking me in.

"What did the party want," says I.

"She was a female," she answers. "I believe she'll be able to find yer a job, Mr. Pooley. She'll be here at half-past ten to-morrow morning, if convenient to you."

I went to my room and smoked a pipe. There was no letters in answer to my notice. The paper might have the biggest circulation in the world, but its corner-pieces wasn't read. What female party was this a-asking after me? A good many women kept shops.

Numbers was widows in the baccy, sweetmeat, and other lines. Any sort of job ashore would suit me, and one to my taste for all I knew might be coming along to-morrow at half-past ten.

Half-past ten came round right enough, for if there's one thing that never disappoints a man it's time: that old bloke, drawed with a beard and a log-glass, always keeps *his* blushen word. There was no letter from the largest circulation. I had come back from getting a mouthful of breakfast, and was a-shav-ing—it was about half-past ten; whilst I was all lather, comes a



"HER MANNER WAS CHANGED."

knock, and Mrs. Bloomer sings out, "Mr. Pooley, the party that called yesterday is a-waiting to see you in my parlour."

"Right," says I, and wiping off the soap, I put on my jacket and went downstairs.

There was a woman and her little boy standing by the table. She wore a green hat, and looked to be got up for a Sunday outing. The boy for his tidy looks was like one of them children that sings in the streets along with men in clean jumpers, and women with babies under their shawls. Mrs. Bloomer, standing beside the door, says, "This is Mr. Pooley."

When I steps in the woman took and dodged a bit, shooting her head out first to port, then to starboard, a-screwdriving of her eyes into me with the twistings of her face. She then says faintly :

"Lor—why—yes. Bill!" and grasping the table she fell to rocking herself, very quietly, saying once or twice softly, "Bill, Bill," but with a note of such grief and reproach that an old goat might have been moved by it.

"What's this," says I, turning upon Mrs. Bloomer.

"Oh, Bill," shrieks the woman on a sudden, holding out her hands to me, "don't pretend not to know me if I'm not to drop dead. Here's your child, your own little William. He was six months old when you left me, and—and—O, William, think—now he's six years!" And with that she lifts him right on to the table, calling out, "Look at your father, Billy. Ask him if he ain't ashamed to have left his poor wife for nigh six year, with never one word to say whether he was alive or dead?"

I thought to myself, "Bloomed if I don't think now that them corner-pieces in the largest circulation *are* read." Mrs. Bloomer's face was like a ship's figure-head, hard with feelings.

"You're quite mistaken," says I. "I never was married in this here world, and so if I've got a wife she must be an angel."

"Never was married!" she screamed, running up to me, whilst the boy sang out, "Mother, I shall fall!" and Mrs. Bloomer put him down. "Never was married!" she shrieks. "D'yer mean to say you forget courting me at my father's, Simon Dadds, who kept the hostillery called the 'Sinking Star,' on the Sandwich Road? Never was married?" she yells, with her words streaming in a quick rattle like coal from a tip, "when the church was St. George's, at Deal, and the date June 21st, 1876? Never was married? Oh, Bill!" and seizing me by the arm she pulls me to the window, and sobs out, "Oh,

Bill ! If *you* ain't so changed, *I* can't be. I've been alone for nigh six years. Look at your child ; it's me as has fed him and done for him, or where'd he be ? Don't say yer don't know me. I never expected that."

And here, letting go of my arm, she buries her face, and lets fly all her nerves in screechings.

"Why don't yer comfort her ?" says Mrs. Bloomer.

"Why don't you ?"
says I. "She's got
nothen to do with *me*."



"LOOK AT YOUR FATHER, BILLY."

With that I walks out. The woman flies after me.

"Bill ! Bill !" she bawls, catching hold of me.

I turned and said : "What's it yer want ?"

Here the young 'un began to cry, roaring for mother.

"What's all this about ?" says Bloomer, coming up from the kitchen. He'd got a cold in his head, and was a-lying by.

"Joe," answered Mrs. Bloomer, "this poor woman has been deserted, along with her child, for nigh upon six year, and now she says she's found her man in Mr. William Pooley."

"I've had almost enough of this here larking, han't you?" says I to the woman. "Who are yer, and what d'yer want? You don't believe I'm your husband. Bloomer, s'elp me, as I stand a living man, I never was married, and that woman knows it."

"How should she know it?" squawked Mrs. Bloomer, like a gull in a gale.

"Got yer there, Pooley," says Bloomer, in a voice thick as gruel with cold.

"I was married," cried the woman, "at St. George's, Deal, June 21st, 1876, and William Pooley was my man's name. Simon Dadds was my father, and kept a hostillery. Oh, ma'm, that he can stand there and pretend not to know nor remember! If my father were alive—he was a sailor then," she sings out, pointing at me. "Will you tell me that yer don't recollect stopping the carriage at the 'Deal Lugger' Inn, as we drove from church, and treating the boatmen? Didn't yer likewise stop at the 'Yarmouth Packet' and keep father awaiting dinner for us——?"

"I tell yer," I roared out, breaking in to her noise, "that I don't know yer, and that I never was married, and that you've mistook your man."

Here Bloomer, stumping back to his kitchen, stops at the head of the staircase to call out:

"Settle it quickly, and don't make no noise, for this 'ouse 'as got a name to lose. I know what sailors are, and mubbee it is, and mubbee it ain't. Lizzie, keep you clear, and if the parties'll come to tarms outside, it'll be agreeable," and down he went.

"Are yer going to tell me, Mr. Pooley," says Mrs. Bloomer, whose face showed like a relish for this shindy, for all that it was as hard as sailors' beef, "that there's no truth in this party's statements?"

"None," I yelled, for their working up of my old iron was a-making me red hot.

"And yer tell us," says Mrs. Bloomer, with a sneer, "that a woman's memory won't allow her to recognise her husband after six years of desertion?"

"He was six months old," says the other, sobbing and pointing to her boy, "when we was left. He sailed in a ship called the *Miranda*. I've never heard of him since, but I knew he was alive, for he desarted at Sydney, and arrived at Liverpool

in a ship called the *Simon 'Orkins*, and that I larnt," she screamed, rounding upon me, "from Jim Redpath, who had sailed with yer afore, and came home with yer in the *'Orkins*."

When she had said this I pulled off my jacket and waistcoat, bared my arms to the elbows, and opening my starched shirt, I turned it under that they might see to the flesh of me. They yelled and fell back, thinking I was going for them, and Bloomer came upstairs again, sneezing. I ran my fingers through my



"GOT YER THERE!"

hair, and flinging open the house door, that the light of God, which the minister says is the truth itself, might shine upon me, I lays hold of the woman and pulls her on to the doorstep, and sings out :

"Now look at me. Can yer see me? Was this 'ere chest your William's?" and I gives my bosom a thump. "Was this here arm your William's?"

"Yes," she shrieks, "that was his crucifige."

"Was this here face your William's?" says I, slapping my

forehead, and I shoves it into her'n, and sings out, "Look again. Look by God's light. Look, if your durned perishing William ever had such a face upon him as mine in all his goin' a-fishin'."

There was a crowd by this time, and noticing it, I steps into the passage, picks up my clothes, and goes upstairs.

After this I shifted my shanty. There was nothen to be lost, I allowed, by a change of address as they call it. By this time all notion of getting a job out of the largest circulation was clean gone. I hired a room in Smith Street, Stepney. The



house was kept by Mrs. Gumble, widow of a coasting skipper. When I paid Mrs. Bloomer she took my money scornfully, and I think would have spoke, but my eye kept her quiet; my pulling off my coat, too, and hauling of the lying party on to the pavement, had done Mrs. Bloomer good.

I still carried some pounds in good money in my pocket, but guessed if I didn't fall in with a situation soon the old leather purse 'ud be showing like the end of a long voyage. I answered advertisements and hunted about; it was all no good—nobody wanted me. What was expected was always exactly what I

hadn't got. Then they wanted written characters, and I had nothing but "V.G." certificates to show 'em. I told Mrs. Gumble I wanted to give up the sea and settle ashore, and she answered that in her heart she couldn't blame me. She advised me to put in a little notice. I told her I'd done so.

Says she, "though once might be of no use, twice might work the traverse. Try another paper."

After considering the thing, and understanding it might find me a chance if it did no more, I walked round to another newspaper with the same piece that had appeared in the corner of the largest circulation, only instead of signing my name William Pooley to it, I took the name of William Treakell, my mother's name afore her marriage, partly because I reckoned that as William Pooley I'd had all the innings I was going to get, whilst Treakell was like starting on a fresh voyage, and partly because I didn't want my name to meet the eye of the lying party.

And now I'm a-going to tell you what, I daresay, you'll not believe; but if it ain't true, then my eyes aren't twins. Two days after the piece had appeared, I returned to Stepney from a cruise to Regent Street. When I walks in, Mrs. Gumble calls out from her back room: "Is that you, Mr. Pooley?"

"Pooley it is," says I, stopping at the foot of the steps.

She comes out, and, looking hard at me, says: "There's been a party, with a boy, inquiring arter you."

"Female party?" says I.

"Yes," she says.

"What does she want?"

"She says that her husband left her when her child was six month old. He was a seafaring man. His name was Pooley," says she, looking at me very hard. "He didn't always used to sign on under that name, and sometimes shipped himself as



"THERE'S BEEN A PARTY, WITH A BOY!"

William Treakell." I breathed short. "It was her mother's maiden name," says Mrs. Gumble.

"What brought her to this house?" says I, talking as if I'd just had a tooth drawn.

"She's always on the look-out for her husband, and reads the advertisements in the papers. She saw the name of Treakell, an' says you're her man. She described yer," says Mrs. Gumble, beginning to talk with a sort of snarl (there's a durned sight too much of fellow-feeling among people of Mrs. Gumble's sort). "She gave me your likeness in words as though she talked with your picture in her 'and. She says yer lodged at Mrs. Bloomer's, down out of the Commercial Road, and left that house because she discovered yer."

"Well?" says I.

"Well," says she. "She'll be here to-morrow morning at ten o'clock, and hopes it'll be convenient to you to see her."

"It'll be convenient for me to see her in——" but I stopped myself; the blooming joke was past beyond all cusses. "How in flames did she know," says I, "that I had called myself Treakell?"

"She asked if the Treakell as lodged here answered to the description she gave of yer. 'No Treakell lodges here,' says I, 'but I've a party stopping in the house as is the same as you describe.' 'Then his name's Pooley,' says she. 'Pooley it is,' says I, the surprise making me answer quick. Then she tells me yer married her at Deal, and desarted her when yer infant babe was six months old."

"I'll not see the hedge-hog," I burst out. "She's ten stuns o' lie from hat to heel. Don't let me be troubled by her. She's no wife of mine."

"You won't see her, d'yer say?"

"Look here! Is there any letter for me?"

"Nary letter. You won't see her, d'yer say?"

"Nary letter?" I says. "It cost me four bob, and who the blooming blazes is a-going to see it where they've gone and stuck it, right amidships of a whole smother of like notices? If they takes yer money why don't they find yer in answers. Damn me if it ain't worse than picking your pocket, to entice a man into spending four bob, and never a one withered reply in two days."

"So yer won't see her, then?" says Mrs. Gumble, lifting

of her eyebrows, and sourly spreading of her lips till I saw the red of her false teeth at the back of her jaw.

I just wished deep down in me that she'd been Gumble instead of his widder, and passed upstairs.

I went to a coffee-house for breakfast early next morning, and was messing about all day looking after a job, but could get nothing to do, not even down at the Docks, though I remember thinking, when it came to my turning my eye in *that* direction, that if I was to knock about ships for a living, I'd better go to sea for good. There was no country fancies to be enjoyed in the Isle of Dogs, no smell of the haystack, no scent of the milkmaid in the breezes there. I went back home to my lodgings in the evening, wore out. Mrs. Gumble told me that the party had called at ten o'clock along with the boy; but I wouldn't hear tell of her, and went straight to my bedroom, and lay down on my bed to smoke a pipe, and to consider whether this sort of seeking for a job wasn't like asking the way to the workhuss.



"I STOPPED MYSELF."

I lay late next morning, being, as I have said, wore out. 'Sides, what was there to get up for? Of course, it would be the old joke over

again, ways of refusing of a man that was the same as punching his head, loafing about all day long, coming home and no letters, and wondering if drowning was as quick as hanging.

I was getting out of bed at the hour of noon, when comes a knock upon the door, and Mrs. Gumble's voice says, "You're wanted."

"Who wants me?" says I.

"An officer of the Court," she answers.

I opened the door to hear her, and putting my head out, says, "What court?"

"The Police Court," says she.

"What does he want?"

"You come down and he'll tell yer."

I dressed and went downstairs. Mrs. Gumble, hearing my footsteps, beckons me into the front parlour, and there I found the party as claimed me for her husband, the young 'un, and a tall man with strong whiskers, dressed like a police boss.

"Now, sir," cries out the party when I steps in, "That's my husband, William Pooley. He deserted me——"

"This female," says the officer, "was up at the Court this morning, asking the magistrate's advice. His Washup sent me round to inquire into her complaint. She says you're her husband. If she can prove that, you're liable for her maintenance—her's and her youngster's."

"His youngster," says the party.

"This all comes along," says I, "of my stepping ashore, and putting a piece in a paper with the 'opes of getting a job. If that," says I, pointing to the party, "is the sort of job that's offered to sailormen when they comes ashore sick of the sea, the sooner it's aboard and 'up keeleg' with them again the better. Mr. Officer, I'm no married man, and she knows I never was her husband. I was in Bombay in a ship called the *Sutlej*, when she

says I was a-marrying of her at Deal."

"Oh, you liar!" shrieks the party.

"If he can prove he didn't marry yer, there's an end," says the officer, turning to the female.

"He's got a crucifige on his arm," she yelled; "so had my William. What made him take the name of Treakell? Don't it stand to reason? His name's William Pooley, and Mr. Officer, he's my man—grewed nothing, broadened a little, certainly, but it's William's face after six years, and, oh, William!" she cries out, "how can you deny it?"

The officer looked very hard at me, and then very hard at the



"WHO WANTS ME!"

female, and then says to her, "If he can prove an alibi what are you going to do? Have you got no certificates of discharge," says he, "going back six year?"

"Have I?" says I, and rushing upstairs I brought him down a handful. There was seven, and they went back twelve years. He turns 'em about, then, asking for the date of the marriage, says :

"Here y'are. He's spoken the truth. This man was at sea when you said you were married to him."

"And am I to believe they're his own certificates?" cried the woman. "Aren't sailors every day a-forging of these here V.G.'s?"

"Put 'em up," says the officer to me. "I can't help you, missis," says he, taking up his hat.

Just one hour later I met an old shipmate on the steps of the Shipping Yard at Tower Hill.

"What are you doing here, Bill?" says he.

"Looking for a ship," says I.

"I heard that you'd squared yards with the sea and was ashore for a settlement."

"And a settlement it's been," says I, and just then, some one singing out for hands for a China clipper, I steps in, scarce smiling as I thought of that night when I brought my fist down on the forecastle-rail of the *Empire*.





'WENT HOME PRETTY MAD!'

A Montana Divorce Suit.

BY W. L. ALDEN.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY R. JACK.

“**Y**OU saw that tall chap standing on the rear platform of the express when she went through here this morning?” said the Jericho station-master. “He’s the Athensville Baptist preacher, and he’s on his way to Chicago to give his testimony in the great divorce suit. What! I never told you about any divorce suit? Well! you surprise me; for that there divorce suit is just the biggest thing of the kind we have ever had in this section of country.

“That Baptist preacher hasn’t anything to do with it except to swear that he married the plaintiff and the defendant. There’s nothing crooked about the Rev. Mr. Humphreys. He’s as good as they make ’em, though I say it myself; and I don’t think much of Baptists as a general thing, having been brought up a Methodist, though I resigned from them when I was made conductor, which is a berth that a man can’t do anything with, unless he can swear a blue streak when the occasion arises.

“Thishyer preacher took charge of the Athensville Baptist Church a matter of five years ago, and being a wonderful man for managing a church, and making it attractive to the general public, it wasn’t long before he had the largest congregation of any preacher in the place. That year the people built him a new church twice as big as the old one. It stands on the hill about a mile out of Athensville, for when it was built it was cal’lated that the town would grow in that direction, which somehow it hasn’t done.

“I tell this just to show what an enterprising man the parson was. He insisted on having the tallest steeple to his new church that could be found anywhere in Montana Territory, and b’gosh! he got it. People used to come from miles away to climb up in that steeple and see the view. - There wasn’t any view to speak of, the country being too hilly in those parts to have much scenery, but for all that people were anxious to say that they had been to the top of the steeple.

“There was an old maid in Mr. Humphreys’ congregation who was more determined to get married than any woman you ever saw. She was one of those thin, persevering-looking

women ; and a mighty dangerous sort they are. Miss Payson, which was this lady's name, was bound to marry a young man by the name of Halsey, who had never done her any harm, and was about as sensible and well-behaved a chap as there was in all Athensville. Of course, he didn't have the least idea of marrying the woman, but he was one of those good-tempered



chaps that are always afraid to say no when a woman asks them to do anything. Good temper is the ruin of lots of folks. It's kept me down, I know that. If I'd been one of these crusty, rampageous fellows that never

does a kind action if he can help it, I should have been superintendent of this road instead of being only a station-master at one of the smallest stations in the Territory. Never you be too good-tempered. Of the two, it ruins more men than whiskey.

"One day, Miss Payson she gets young Halsey to take her up in the steeple of the Baptist Church. You see, visitors were always going up that steeple between the hours of ten and five, during which the sexton stayed at the church to attend to things, and see that everybody conducted themselves as they should. At five

o'clock he locked up the door that led to the steeple, and then he locked up the church door, and went home for the night.

"Miss Payson and her young man went up the steeple about three o'clock in the afternoon, but she said she enjoyed it so much that Halsey was prevailed upon to stay there with her a good deal later than he had intended to stay. She kept him

"HAD THE LARGEST CONGREGATION."

pointing out all the houses in the town, and every hill and valley in the whole neighbourhood ; and when she finally asked him to look at his watch and tell her the time, she was, as she pretended, dreadfully alarmed to find that it was half-past five. Halsey ran down the stairs and found that the door was locked, and nobody was within hearing. The sexton had forgotten that there was any one up the steeple, and had locked up and gone home at five o'clock, as usual. Halsey came back and told Miss Payson, who burst into tears, and said that her reputation was ruined. She and Halsey would have to spend the night in the steeple, unless he was willing to jump out of the window and break his neck, and she would rather die a thousand times than let him do that.

"Halsey was considerably scared himself, for he saw that, unless he could invent some way of getting Miss Payson out of that steeple, he would have to marry her whether he wanted to or not. He thought the matter over for a while, Miss Payson weeping her level best, and resting her head in a forgetful sort of way on his shoulder. Finally a bright idea struck him. There was the bell rope, which was a stout one-inch manilla. Why shouldn't he lower Miss Payson to the ground with it, and then slide down it himself?



"RESTING HER HEAD ON HIS SHOULDER!"

"He explained his plan to the lady, but she didn't seem to like it. She said she was sure the rope would break, or that he would drop it, or that she would be killed in some sort of way if the experiment was tried. 'No,' says she ; 'I will remain here, and trust to your honour as a gentleman to defend me

from the sneers of the heartless world. I really haven't the courage to allow you to lower me down this awful height with any rope.'

"Halsey wouldn't hear to her objections, and argued with her a long time. It wasn't until he accidentally mentioned that the steeple was just chock full of mice, and rats, and bats, and such, that Miss Payson consented to try the rope. Even then she was a mighty dissatisfied woman, and came very near resolving that she would take the risk of the wild animals rather than lose such a first-class chance for capturing a desirable husband. Halsey rigged up a sort of seat for the woman, so that she could sit in the bight of the rope, with lashings around her here and there, and couldn't fall out if she wanted to. Then he got her to stand on the window ledge, and lowered away. Miss Payson shrieked a good deal at first, and begged Halsey to let her come back and die close to him, but he wasn't going to have any woman dying around his neck if he knew himself. So he lowered her down gently and easily, encouraging her all the time, till he found that his rope had come to an end. It wasn't quite as long as he had supposed that it was, and the upshot was that there was Miss Payson about thirty feet from the ground, with no possible way of reaching it unless Halsey should let go his hold of the rope.

"He thought of letting go of it, but, being a humane, good-tempered man, as I have said, he couldn't bring himself to do it, since the result would have been that either Miss Payson would have been killed, or at least most of her limbs would have been broken. So he made the end of the rope fast to a beam, and called out to Miss Payson not to lose courage, and he would soon think of some way of getting her out of the difficulty. She begged him to draw her up again, and he actually tried to do it, knowing all the while what the consequences would be if he succeeded; but he found that he didn't have the necessary strength. Miss Payson was heavier than she looked to be, though she was mostly bones; but she was a good seventy-five feet below him, and it would have taken two men of his strength to have hoisted her into the steeple again. He pulled at the rope till he was pretty near exhausted, for he naturally felt a little ashamed of acknowledging to a woman that there was anything that he wasn't strong enough to do. However, he had to come to it at last, and tell her that if it was to save both their lives he couldn't manage to pull her back into the steeple.

So she settled down to cry, and he settled down to smoke a pipe, with a view to clearing his ideas.

"All of a sudden he saw what he ought to do, and wondered that he had been such an idiot as not to have seen it before. There was the bell just above his head, and all he had to do was to climb up and ring it by swinging the clapper from side to side, till the alarm should bring back the sexton with the keys. By this time it was getting rather dark, and Halsey set to work at that bell, and kept on tolling it slow and regular, for that was the only way he could manage to ring it.

"It's the custom with us to toll the bell when anybody dies, and to give just as many strokes on the bell as the deceased had lived years. When Halsey began to toll that bell the Athensville people listened to find out how old the deceased had been. When the strokes had got up among the eighties, they allowed that the oldest settler in the town must have died very sudden, for he had been seen drunk as usual and in perfect health that afternoon, as late as three o'clock. But the bell kept on, and bimeby, after it had tolled some two hundred and fifty times, and showed no signs of stopping, folks began to think that the sexton had just happened to hear about the death of Methusalah, and was notifying other people of the fact.

"You may ask why didn't somebody go to the church and find out what the bell was ringing for. Well! for one thing it was just supper time, and nobody felt anxious to take a walk of a mile or two just at that hour. Then, too, it had been said that the Baptist churchyard was haunted, and there wasn't any general desire to interfere with ghosts in case they should have taken a notion to toll the bell. The tolling kept on till Halsey had tolled the bell over four hundred times, and then the Rev. Mr. Humphreys arrived on the spot; and when he heard Miss Payson's voice somewhere in the air over his head, he was considerably startled, though not being a believer in ghosts he wasn't the least bit frightened.

" 'How on earth did you come up there, ma'am?' asks the minister. 'And what are you tolling the bell for?'

"Miss Payson explained what was the matter. She said that she and Mr. Halsey had come to the church in the afternoon cal'ulating to find the parson there, and to get married; that not finding him they had gone into the steeple to see the view, and had accidentally been locked in. She was sure that she couldn't live many minutes longer, she felt so weak, and she hoped Mr.

Humphreys would marry her to Mr. Halsey without another minute's delay, and so save her reputation, even if it didn't save her life. The minister wanted to send for help, and get her safe on the solid ground before marrying her, but she said that she must be married before she could dare to face any of her townsmen. Such, she said, were also dear Mr. Halsey's views; and if Mr. Humphreys had the feelings of a man and a Christian, let alone a Baptist minister, he would go ahead with the marriage service.

"Mr. Humphreys finally consented, and called out to Halsey to nod when he should see the minister wave his right arm, that being the only way in which Halsey could make the responses, seeing as his voice didn't fairly reach to the ground. Having arranged this satisfactorily, as he thought, Mr. Humphreys went ahead, and in about two minutes he had Miss Payson married to Mr. Halsey. Just then the sexton came up with the keys, and knowing where he could lay his hand on a length of rope, he took it up into the steeple with him, and bent it on to the bell rope. Then he and Mr. Halsey lowered Miss Payson to the ground, and came down the stairs together.

" 'You'll find your wife waiting for you in the graveyard,' says Mr. Humphreys to Halsey. 'She's naturally a little excited, and she's resting on a flat tombstone.'

" 'If you mean Miss Payson, says Halsey, 'I can't understand why you call her my wife.'

" 'I call her your wife,' says the minister, 'because I have just married you two, and I don't allow no man to question the binding character of any marriage that I have a hand in.'

" 'Married us!' cries Halsey. 'When and where? This is the first time I have heard of it.'

" 'Young man,' says the parson, 'thishyer's a serious subject, and I don't approve of jokes on either weddings or funerals. Miss Payson told me, when she was swinging there



" 'HOW ON EARTH DID YOU GET UP THERE?' "

in the air, that you and she wanted to be married the worst way, and so I married you. If there's any mistake I'm not to blame. I've done my best as minister of the Gospel, and if you don't like it you can go to the Divorce Court and see if you can get it altered. I'll tell you candidly that I don't believe any Court will listen to you, for my marriages are iron-clad and bullet-proof every time, and worth a good sight more than the five dollars that I'm waiting for you to pay me.'

"Well, Halsey he went home pretty mad, without waiting to see Miss Payson, and the very next day he begins a suit for a divorce. That's the great divorce suit I was telling you about when I pointed out the Rev. Mr. Humphreys to you. It's been dragging along for four years. Sometimes it's decided in favour of Halsey, and sometimes in favour of Miss Payson, and then its always appealed, and has to be tried over again. Miss Payson, she sticks to it that Halsey had agreed to marry her, and that he understood perfectly well everything the parson said while the ceremony was going on. The parson says that Halsey nodded as was agreed upon when he asked him if he took Miss Payson to be his wedded wife, and all that sort of thing, and that Halsey had hold of the rope that was tied to Miss Payson, which was all the same as having hold of her hand. On the other hand, Halsey swears that he never meant to marry the woman, and never knew that a marriage ceremony was being gone through, but that he just nodded out of friendliness when he saw the parson waving his hand at him. The evidence, as you can see, is pretty straight against him, and when he does happen to get a verdict it costs him a powerful lot of money, for our jurymen are mighty honest and high-toned, and it takes a good deal of money to induce them to see things in a light favourable to Halsey. I'm interested in the case because of its importance, for if the courts finally decide that a man can be married to a woman when he is seventy-five feet above her, and don't know what is going on, none of us is safe; and first you know some woman that is rushing through here on the express will be married to me while I am selling tickets in my office, and knowing no more about it than a child unhung. Well, there is no use in sitting and dreading dangers that may never come to time, and I suppose that if it's a man's fate to be married he's got to knock under, and there's no good in worrying himself over it till the time comes."



"CLAD IN AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT SUIT."

The Nameless Man.

BY RODRIGUES OTTOLENGUI.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY STANLEY L. WOOD.

MR. BARNES was sitting in his private room, with nothing of special importance to occupy his thoughts, when his office boy announced a visitor.

"What name?" asked Mr. Barnes.

"None!" was the reply.

"You mean," said the detective, "that the man did not give you his name. He must have one, of course. Show him in."

A minute later the stranger entered, and, bowing courteously, began the conversation at once.

"Mr. Barnes, the famous detective, I believe?" said he.

"My name is Barnes," replied the detective. "May I have the pleasure of knowing yours?"

"I sincerely hope so," continued the stranger. "The fact is, I suppose I have forgotten it."

"Forgotten your name?" Mr. Barnes scented an interesting case, and became doubly attentive.

"Yes!" said the visitor. "That is precisely my singular predicament. I seem to have lost my identity. That is the object of my call. I wish you to discover who I am. As I am evidently a full-grown man, I can certainly claim that I have a past history, but to me that past is entirely a blank. I awoke this morning in this condition, yet apparently in possession of all my faculties, so much so that I at once saw the advisability of consulting a first-class detective, and, upon inquiry, I was directed to you."

"Your case is most interesting, from my point of view, I mean. To you, of course, it must seem unfortunate. Yet it is not unparalleled. There have been many such cases recorded, and, for your temporary relief, I may say that sooner or later, complete restoration of memory usually occurs. But now, let us try to unravel your mystery as soon as possible, that you may suffer as little inconvenience as there need be. I would like to ask you a few questions?"

"As many as you like, and I will do my best to answer."

"Do you think that you are a New Yorker?"

"I have not the least idea, whether I am or not."

"You say you were advised to consult me. By whom?"

"The clerk at the Waldorf Hotel, where I slept last night."

"Then, of course, he gave you my address. Did you find it necessary to ask him how to find my offices?"

"Well, no, I did not. That seems strange, does it not? I certainly had no difficulty in coming here. I suppose that must be a significant fact, Mr. Barnes?"

"It tends to show that you have been familiar with New



"I WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS."

York, but we must still find out whether you live here or not. How did you register at the hotel?"

"M. J. G. Remington, City."

"You are sure that Remington is not your name?"

"Quite sure. After breakfast this morning I was passing through the lobby when the clerk called me twice by that name. Finally, one of the hall-boys touched me on the shoulder and explained that I was wanted at the desk. I was very much confused to find myself called 'Mr. Remington,' a name which certainly is not my own. Before I fully realised my position, I said to the clerk, 'Why do you call me Remington?' and

he replied, 'Because you registered under that name.' I tried to pass it off, but I am sure that the clerk looks upon me as a suspicious character."

"What baggage have you with you at the hotel?"

"None. Not even a satchel."

"May there not be something in your pockets that would help us; letters, for example?"

"I am sorry to say that I have made a search in that direction but found nothing. Luckily I did have a pocket-book though."

"Much money in it?"

"In the neighbourhood of five hundred dollars."

Mr. Barnes turned to his table and made a few notes on a pad of paper. While so engaged his visitor took out a fine gold watch, and, after a glance at the face, was about to return it to his pocket when Mr. Barnes wheeled around in his chair, and said:—

"That is a handsome watch you have there. Of a curious pattern too. I am rather interested in old watches."

The stranger seemed confused for an instant, and quickly put up his watch, saying:

"There is nothing remarkable about it. Merely an old family relic. I value it more for that than anything else. But about my case, Mr. Barnes, how long do you think it will take to restore my identity to me? It is rather awkward to go about under a false name."

"I should think so," said the detective. "I will do my best for you, but you have given me absolutely no clue to work upon, so that it is impossible to say what my success will be. Still I think forty-eight hours should suffice. At least in that time I ought to make some discoveries for you. Suppose you call again on the day after to-morrow at noon precisely. Will that suit you?"

"Very well, indeed. If you can tell me who I am at that time I shall be more than convinced that you are a great detective, as I have been told."

He arose and prepared to go, and upon the instant Mr. Barnes touched a button under his table with his foot, which caused a bell to ring in a distant part of the building, no sound of which penetrated the private office. Thus anyone could visit Mr. Barnes in his den, and might leave unsuspecting of the fact that a spy would be awaiting him out in the street who would

shadow him persistently day and night until recalled by his chief. After giving the signal, Mr. Barnes held his strange visitor in conversation a few moments longer to allow his spy opportunity to get to his post.

"How will you pass the time away, Mr. Remington?" said he. "We may as well call you by that name, until I find your true one."

"Yes, I suppose so. As to what I shall do during the next forty-eight hours, why, I think I may as well devote myself to seeing the sights. It is a remarkably pleasant day for a stroll, and I think I will visit your beautiful Central Park."

"A capital idea. By all means, I would advise occupation of that kind. It would be best not to do any business until your memory is restored to you."

"Business. Why, of course, I can do no business."

"No! If you were to order any goods, for example, under the name of Remington, later on when you resume your proper identity, you might be arrested as an impostor."

"By George, I had not thought of that. My position is more serious than I had realised. I thank you for the warning. Sight-seeing will assuredly be my safest plan for the next two days."

"I think so. Call at the time agreed upon, and hope for the best. If I should need you before then, I will send to your hotel."

Then saying "Good morning," Mr. Barnes turned to his desk again, and, as the stranger looked at him before stepping out of the room, the detective seemed engrossed with some papers before him. Yet scarcely had the door closed upon the retreating form of his recent visitor, when Mr. Barnes looked up, with an air of expectancy. A moment later a very tiny bell in a drawer of his desk rang, indicating that the man had left the building, the signal having been sent to him by one of his employés, whose business it was to watch all departures, and notify his chief. A few moments later Mr. Barnes himself emerged, clad in an entirely different suit of clothing, and with such alteration in the colour of his hair, that more than a casual glance would have been required to recognise him.

When he reached the street the stranger was nowhere in sight, but Mr. Barnes went to a doorway opposite, and there he found, written in blue pencil, the word "up," whereupon he walked rapidly up town as far as the next corner, where once

more he examined a door-post, upon which he found the word "right," which indicated the way the men ahead of him had turned. Beyond this he could expect no signals, for the spy shadowing the stranger did not know positively that his chief would take part in the game. The two signals which he had written on the doors were merely a part of a routine, and intended to aid Mr. Barnes should he follow; but if he did so, he would be expected to be in sight of the spy by the time the second signal were reached. And so it proved in this instance, for as Mr. Barnes turned the corner to the right, he easily discerned his man about two blocks ahead, and presently was near enough to see "Remington" also.

The pursuit continued until Mr. Barnes was surprised to see him enter the Park, thus carrying out his intention as stated in his interview with the detective. Entering at the Fifth Avenue gate he made his way towards the menagerie, and here a curious incident occurred. The stranger had mingled with the crowd in the monkey-house, and was enjoying the antics of the mischievous little animals, when Mr. Barnes, getting close behind him, deftly removed a pocket-handkerchief from the tail of his coat and swiftly transferred it to his own.

On the day following, shortly before noon, Mr. Barnes walked quickly into the reading-room of the Fifth Avenue Hotel. In one corner there is a handsome mahogany cabinet, containing three compartments, each of which is entered through double doors, having glass panels in the upper half. About these



"HE FOUND THE WORD 'UP'."

panels are draped yellow silk curtains, and in the centre of each appears a white porcelain numeral. These compartments are used as public telephone stations, the applicant being shut in, so as to be free from the noise of the outer room.

Mr. Barnes spoke to the girl in charge, and then passed into the compartment numbered "2." Less than five minutes later Mr. Leroy Mitchel came into the reading-room. His keen eyes peered about him, scanning the countenances of those busy with the papers or writing, and then he gave the telephone girl a number, and went into the compartment numbered "1." About ten minutes elapsed before Mr. Mitchel came out again, and, having paid the toll, he left the hotel. When Mr. Barnes emerged, there was an expression of extreme satisfaction upon his face. Without lingering, he also went out. But instead of following Mr. Mitchel through the main lobby to Broadway, he crossed the reading-room and reached 23rd Street through the side door. Thence he proceeded to the station of the Elevated Railroad, and went up town. Twenty minutes later he was ringing the bell of Mr. Mitchel's residence. The buttons, who answered his summons, informed him that his master was not at home.

"He usually comes in to luncheon, however, does he not?" asked the detective.

"Yes, sir," responded the boy.

"Is Mrs. Mitchel at home?"

"No, sir."

"Miss Rose?"

"Yes, sir."

"Ah! Then I'll wait. Take my card to her."

Mr. Barnes passed into the luxurious drawing-room, and was soon joined by Rose, Mr. Mitchel's adopted daughter.

"I am sorry papa is not at home, Mr. Barnes," said the little lady, "but he will surely be in to luncheon, if you will wait."

"Yes, thank you, I think I will. It is quite a trip up, and, being here, I may as well stop awhile and see your father, though the matter is not of any great importance."

"Some interesting case, Mr. Barnes? If so, do tell me about it. You know I am almost as much interested in your cases as papa is."

"Yes, I know you are, and my vanity is flattered. But I am sorry to say I have nothing on hand at present worth relat-

ing. My errand is a very simple one. Your father was saying, a few days ago, that he was thinking of buying a bicycle, and yesterday, by accident, I came across a machine of an entirely new make, which seems to me superior to anything yet produced. I thought he might be interested to see it, before deciding what kind to buy."



"SWIFTLY TRANSFERRED IT TO HIS OWN."

"I am afraid you are too late, Mr. Barnes. Papa has bought a bicycle already."

"Indeed! What style did he choose?"

"I really do not know, but it is down in the lower hall, if you care to look at it."

"It is hardly worth while, Miss Rose. After all, I have no interest in the new model, and if your father has found something that he likes, I won't even mention the other to him. It

might only make him regret his bargain. Still, on second thoughts, I will go down with you, if you will take me, into the dining-room and show me the head of that moose which your father has been bragging about killing. I believe it has come back from the taxidermist's?"

"Oh, yes! He is just a monster. Come on!"

They went down to the dining-room, and Mr. Barnes expressed great admiration about the moose's head, and praised Mr. Mitchel's skill as a marksman. But he had taken a moment to scrutinize the bicycle which stood in the hall-way, while Rose was opening the blinds in the dining-room. Then they returned to the drawing-room, and after a little more conversation Mr. Barnes departed, saying that he could not wait any longer, but he charged Rose to tell her father that he particularly desired him to call at noon on the following day.

Promptly at the time appointed, Remington walked into the office of Mr. Barnes, and was announced. The detective was in his private room. Mr. Leroy Mitchel had been admitted but a few moments before.

"Ask Mr. Remington in," said Mr. Barnes to his boy, and when that gentleman entered, before he could show surprise to find a third party present, the detective said:

"Mr. Mitchel, this is the gentleman whom I wish you to meet. Permit me to introduce to you, Mr. Mortimer J. Goldie, better known to the sporting fraternity as G. J. Mortimer, the champion short-distance bicycle rider, who recently rode a mile in the phenomenal time of 1.56, on a quarter-mile track."

As Mr. Barnes spoke, he gazed from one to the other of his companions, with a half-quizzical, and wholly pleased expression on his face. Mr. Mitchel appeared much interested, but the newcomer was evidently greatly astonished. He looked blankly at Mr. Barnes a moment, then dropped into a chair with the query:

"How in the name of conscience did you find that out?"

"That much was not very difficult," replied the detective.

"I can tell you more; indeed I can supply your whole past history, provided your memory has been sufficiently restored for you to recognise my facts as true."

Mr. Barnes looked at Mr. Mitchel and winked one eye in a most suggestive manner, at which that gentleman burst out into hearty laughter, finally saying:

"We may as well admit that we are beaten, Goldie. Mr. Barnes has been too much for us."

"But I want to know how he has done it," persisted Mr. Goldie.

"I have no doubt that Mr. Barnes will gratify you. Indeed,



I am as curious as you are to know by what means he has arrived at his quick solution of the problem which we set him."

"I will enlighten you as to detective methods with pleasure," said Mr. Barnes. "Let me begin with the visit made to me by this gentleman two days ago. At the very outset his statement aroused my suspicion, though I did my best not to let him think so. He

announced to me that he had lost his identity, and I promptly told him that his case was not uncommon. I said that, in order that he might feel sure that I did not doubt his tale.



"EXPRESSED GREAT ADMIRATION ABOUT THE MOOSE'S HEAD."

But truly his case, if he were telling the truth, was absolutely unique. Men have lost recollection of their past, and even have forgotten their names. But I have never before heard of a man who had forgotten his name, *and at the same time knew that he had done so.*"

"A capital point, Mr. Barnes," said Mr. Mitchel. "You were certainly shrewd to suspect fraud so early."

"Well, I cannot say that I suspected fraud so soon, but the story was so unlikely, that I could not believe it immediately. I therefore was what I might call analytically attentive during the rest of the interview. The next point worth noting which came out was that although he had forgotten himself, he had not forgotten New York, for he admitted having come to me without special guidance."

"I remember that," interrupted Mr. Goldie, "and I think I even said to you at the time that it was significant."

"And I told you that it at least showed that you had been familiar with New York. This was better proven when you said that you would spend the day at Central Park, and when, after leaving here, you had no difficulty to find your way thither."

"Do you mean to say that you had me followed? I made sure that no one was after me."

"Well, yes, you were followed," said Mr. Barnes, with a smile. "I had a spy after you, and I followed you as far as the Park myself. But let me come to the other points in your interview and my deductions. You told me that you had registered as 'M. J. G. Remington.' This helped me considerably, as we shall see presently. A few minutes later you took out your watch, and in that little mirror over my desk, which I use occasionally when I turn my back upon a visitor, I noted that there was an inscription on the outside of the case. I turned and asked you something about the watch, when you hastily returned it to your pocket, with the remark that it was 'an old family relic.' Now can you explain how you could have known that, supposing that you had forgotten who you were?"

"Neatly caught, Goldie," laughed Mr. Mitchel. "You certainly made a mess of it there."

"It was an asinine slip," said Mr. Goldie, laughing also.

"Now then," continued Mr. Barnes, "you readily see that I had good reason for believing that you had not forgotten your

name. On the contrary, I was positive that your name was a part of the inscription on the watch. What, then, could be your purpose in pretending otherwise? I did not discover that for some time. However, I decided to go ahead, and find you out if I could. Next I noted two things. Your coat opened once, so that I saw, pinned to your vest, a bicycle badge, which I recognised as the emblem of the League of American Wheelmen."

"Oh! Oh!" cried Mr. Mitchel. "Shame on you, Goldie, for a blunderer."

"I had entirely forgotten the badge," said Mr. Goldie.

"I also observed," the detective went on, "little indentations on the sole of your shoe, as you had your legs crossed, which satisfied me that you were a rider even before I observed the badge. Now, then, we come to the name, and the significance thereof. Had you really lost your memory, the choosing of a name when you registered at the hotel, would have been a haphazard matter of no importance to me. But as soon as I decided that you were imposing upon me, I knew that your choice of a name had been a deliberate act of the mind; one from which deductions could be drawn."

"Ah! Now we come to the interesting part," said Mr. Mitchel. "I love to follow a detective when he uses his brains."

"The name as registered, and I examined the registry myself to make sure, was odd. Three initials are unusual. A man without memory, and therefore not quite sound mentally, would hardly have chosen so many. Then why had it been done in this instance? What more natural than that these initials represented the true name? In assuming an alias, it is the most common method to transpose the real name in some way. At least it was a working hypothesis. Then the last name might be very significant. 'Remington.' The Remingtons make guns, sewing-machines, typewriters, and bicycles. Now, this man was a bicycle rider, I was sure. If he chose his own initials as a part of the alias, it was possible that he selected 'Remington' because it was familiar to him. I even imagined that he might be an agent for Remington bicycles, and I had arrived at that point during our interview, when I advised him not to buy anything until his identity was restored. But I was sure of my quarry, when I stole a handkerchief from him at the park, and found the initials 'M.J.G.' upon the same."

"Marked linen on your person!" exclaimed Mr. Mitchel.

"Worse and worse ! We'll never make a successful criminal of you, Goldie."

"Perhaps not ! I shan't cry over it."

"I felt sure of my success by this time," continued Mr. Barnes, "yet at the very next step I was balked. I looked over a list of L. A. W. members and could not find a name to fit my initials, which shows, as you will see presently, that, as I may say, "too many clues spoil the broth." Without the handkerchief I would have done better. Next I secured a catalogue of the Remingtons, which gave a list of their authorised agents, and again I failed. Returning to my office I received information from my spy, sent in by messenger, which promised to open a way for me. He had followed you about, Mr. Goldie, and I must say you played your part very well, so far as avoiding acquaintances is concerned. But at last you went to a public telephone, and called up someone. My man saw the importance of discovering to whom you had spoken, and bribed the telephone attendant to give him the information. All that he learned, however, was that you had spoken to the public station at the Fifth Avenue Hotel. My spy thought that this was inconsequent, but it proved to me at once that there was collusion, and that your man must have been at the other station by previous appointment. As that was at noon, a few minutes before the same hour on the following day, that is to say, yesterday, I went to the Fifth Avenue Hotel telephone and secreted myself in the middle compartment, hoping to hear what your partner might say to you. I failed in this, as the boxes are too well made to permit sound to pass from one to the other ; but imagine my gratification to see Mr. Mitchel himself go into the box."

"And why?" asked Mr. Mitchel.

"Why, as soon as I saw you, I comprehended the whole scheme. It was you who had concocted the little diversion to test my ability. Thus, at last, I understood the reason for the pretended loss of identity. With the knowledge that you were in it, I was more than ever determined to get at the facts. Knowing that you were out, I hastened to your house, hoping for a chat with little Miss Rose, as the most likely member of your family to get information from."

"Oh, fie ! Mr. Barnes," said Mr. Mitchel, "to play upon the innocence of childhood ! I am ashamed of you !"

"All's fair, etc. Well, I succeeded. I found Mr. Goldie's bicycle in your hall-way, and, as I suspected, 'twas a Remington."

I took the number and hurried down to the agency, where I readily discovered that wheel number 5,086 is ridden by G. J. Mortimer, one of their regular racing team. I also learned that Mortimer's private name is Mortimer J. Goldie. I was much pleased at this, because it showed how good my reasoning had been about the alias, for you observe that the racing name is merely a transposition of the family name. The watch, of



"THEY ADJOURNED TO DELMONICO'S."

course, is a prize, and the inscription would have proved that you were imposing upon me, Mr. Goldie, had you permitted me to see it."

"Of course. That was why I put it back in my pocket."

"I said just now," said Mr. Barnes, "that without the stolen handkerchief I would have done better. Having it, when I looked over the L.A.W. list I went through the 'G's' only. Without it I should have looked through the 'G's,' 'J's,' and

'M's,' not knowing how the letters may have been transposed. In that case I should have found 'G. J. Mortimer,' and the initials would have proved that I was on the right track."

"You have done well, Mr. Barnes," said Mr. Mitchel. "I asked Goldie to play the part of a nameless man for a few days, to have some fun with you. But you have had fun with us, it seems. Though, I am conceited enough to say, that had it been possible for me to play the principal part, you would not have pierced my identity so soon."

"Oh! I don't know," said Mr. Barnes. "We are both of us a little egotistical, I fear."

"Undoubtedly. Still, if I ever set another trap for you, I will assign myself the chief rôle."

"Nothing would please me better," said Mr. Barnes. "But, gentlemen, as you have lost in this little game, it seems to me that some one owes me a dinner, at least!"

"I'll stand the expense with pleasure," said Mr. Mitchel.

"Not at all," interrupted Mr. Goldie. "It was through my blundering that we lost, and I'll pay the piper."

"Settle it between you," cried Mr. Barnes. "But let us walk on. I am getting hungry."

Whereupon they adjourned to Delmonico's.





To Phyllis:

This is my fancy that you stand
 In some remote & tranquil land,
 Where twilight quickens into stars,
 While little waves of silence creep
 Along the quiet shore of sleep,
 Brimming its bays & harbour bays.

But, Phyllis, I with weary pen
 Still toil amid the ways of men,
 Doomed to perpetual banishment;
 Yet this mad moon that glances through
 My study panes, has smiled on you,
 And so I work—and am content.

Charles Kennett Burrow.





“Tea will be Provided.”

By E. S. GREW.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY T. S. C. CROWTHER.

THE children stood waiting to go into the Refreshment Tent to Tea. One of them carried a baby several sizes smaller than herself.

“Is that little Jimmy?” said another of the children. “Oh, ‘e *do* look nice! Little dear!”

Jimmy’s temporary mother unwound a little more of the red worsted shawl from his venerable face.

“Yus,” she admitted. “‘E do, don’t ‘e? It’s the fust time ‘e’s ‘ad ‘air oil on.”

“It do mike an improvement,” her friend agreed. “Little *deear!*”

“‘Ave you seen my brother’s new ‘at?” inquired another, taking advantage of the sympathetic moment. “‘E’s ‘ad it give ‘im.”

They had not; and the hat, though a gift which was not likely to escape attention, did not interest the group waiting at the door of the tent. But it sent them off on an emulative comparison of the new stor’ ‘ats, pinnyfores, and in one case—ostentatiously exhibited—“new pair o’ garters,” which had been put on to signalise the occasion of the Treat. The infant in arms, seeing his claims in danger of being forgotten, made an attempt to assert himself.

“I s’y, Clara Johnson,” exclaimed the new pair of garters, “just *look* at your byby! If ‘e ain’t eatin’ ‘is ticket!”

Half of the ticket was recovered with some difficulty from the byby’s mouth—his sister threatening that if he did that again she’d drop him—and his pained remonstrances were stifled by a closer wrapping in the worsted shawl. The conversation was resumed by a young lady in a terra-cotta frock, who had clearly been making use of the interruption to think of something which should establish an unimpeachable claim to superiority.

“I ‘ad a bath all over!” she observed.

There was a pause of envy; perhaps of surprise; and nobody seeming to have anything to say better than *that* the discussion presently gave place to one upon general topics. I looked at the young person who had so triumphantly achieved the last word in the conversation, and to my surprise found

something familiar in the face. She began to smile and I was sure of it. It was Carrie. I had never before seen her look so magnificent. Her terra-cotta skirts were trimmed with rusty velvet; she had acquired a magenta sash; her straw hat was trimmed with ribbon which once had been light blue.

"Hallo, Carrie!" I said, by way of saying something; "enjoying yourself?"

"Yes, sir," she said, her smile widening.

"Thank you, sir."

"Why haven't you brought your brother with you?" I asked.

"'E didn't have a ticket, sir," she explained, with her hands dropped by her side in the attitude of attention which I generally associated with her, "so 'e couldn't come, sir."

"Well, perhaps he'll come another year."

"Yes, sir," she agreed, still with the smile as if it were the best joke in the world.

"Thank you, sir."

The "thank you, sir," was a habit of Carrie's—who was a retainer of my friend Clifford, or perhaps I should say rather a retainer of Mrs. Baily, the lady who "did" for him at his rooms in Blanchard's Inn. Carrie helped to clean the boots and the silver, and occasionally—a privilege of which I am sure she was fond—assisted in waiting at table.

On these occasions she generally thanked you when she handed you a plate; she invariably echoed your "thank you"; and I have been greeted by her with "Good morning, sir, thank you, sir."

She had been introduced by Mrs. Baily as "a good little gell to run of arrands; and what her pore mother" (said Mrs. Baily)



"'T'S THE FUST TIME 'E'S 'AD
'AIR OIL ON!'"

"would do without 'er, I'm sure *I* don't know, with three young children and 'er 'usban' always out of work, at least 'e 'ave been ever since I've knew 'im." From other voluble details which Mrs. Baily supplied concerning Carrie's family, I have reason to believe that her mother would have done very poorly without her; and even Clifford's housekeeping would have suffered.

She had an excellent way with the tradespeople. "'Now you needn't give me any of those there large tomaters,' I says to 'im"—I heard her recounting this experience with the greengrocer to Mrs. Baily the other morning, as I came up the stairs—" 'I don't want any of your large 'uns.' 'Well,' 'e says to me, 'I thought you said as you wanted 'em ripe.' 'I do,' I says, 'but I ain't goin' to 'ave any of those big tomaters. Mr. Clifford, 'e says, 'e'd just as soon eat turnups, so you needn't rummage at the back for the worst as you've got,' I says. 'You can just sort out the small ones,' I says."

Clifford, who seldom spoke to her, she regarded with a respectful wonder. Her admiration for him, which she shared with Mrs. Baily, found an outlet and expression in the care she lavished upon his array of boots, and the faithfulness with which she removed every speck from his extensive wardrobe. What her age was I never attempted to guess. Mrs. Baily said she was an old-fashioned little thing; and the description suited her. She always reminded me of the Charity School child, her hair drawn tightly back into a short pigtail, her face always shining from recent soaping, her frock of a stiff ungainliness. If you met her out of doors you always found her accompanied by a large bag, which she used to carry, I think, to emphasise her position as a person of large responsibilities. She had brought it with her to the Treat.

It was Clifford who had suggested I should go with him to the Treat—an entertainment which the Benchers of Blanchard's Inn, moving with the times, had provided for the children round about Clare Market and Drury Lane.

"I didn't know you were interested in the lower classes," I said to Clifford.

"I'm not," he returned; "except as a subject for epigram.



"'E's 'AD IT GIVE 'IM."

I'm going because the Egertons will be there. I thought perhaps you'd like to meet them."

So I went, and, on the whole, I began to find the children almost as entertaining as the Egertons, who had come to assist at the children's tea. Clifford, who had appeared as usual faultlessly dressed, found to his lively disgust, that he was expected to assist also.

Indeed, the task of waiting upon the children at tea was one which carried with it little reward beyond that commonly ascribed to virtue. The young heathen of Clare Market—a district where childhood spends its leisure hours in a continual difference with shrill-voiced and slatternly matrons, who are always threatening to give it wot for, on'y let 'em git 'old of it—were by no means of the pattern which generally gets itself sent to Sunday School Treats. They were not so far, as one could see, "pattern" children in any sense; nor were the efforts of a number of teachers from the neighbouring Board School to enforce propriety of behaviour so successful as they deserved to be.

The young guests were to have marched in front of a dais of benevolent and distinguished visitors, but the procession was broken up by the rear files in a rush for places; and the "Grace," with which it was sought to begin the feast, was left to be sung by its promoters alone.

"We don't want no bloomin' gryce," observed a young highwayman, whose "wedding garment" did not comprise a coat. "What abaht that tea?"

When it came—poured out in an unpleasant-looking liquid from the spouts of water-cans, with an accompaniment of piles of cake and cubes of bread and jam—they fell upon it like the wolf on the fold. They stopped neither for breath nor thanks.

"Hi, Mister!" they ordered Clifford, "shove along with them apples."

"Pull up your socks, Mister!"—Clifford had completed his toilet with white spats—"we ain't begun yet!"

It is only right to say that these manifestations were mostly confined to the boys. The little girls were much better behaved. *They* had washed their faces—a step which few of the boys seemed to have thought desirable—and they were behaving accordingly. Some of them through mere shyness were standing the risk of not being served at all; and now and again you would come across a little lady drinking her tea with studied ele-

gance and self-repression. Carrie was one of them. As it happened, the part of the table at which she sat was very well provided for ; but Carrie was taking positively nothing but cups of tea—a circumstance I attributed either to her notion of propriety or to a wish to impress her neighbours with the belief that "high tea" was no uncommon event in *her* experience.

When tea was over, the throng skilfully evading another attempt to get them to sing grace, went storming out into the Gardens to play. They did not play very well. They wandered about the smooth lawns rather aimlessly ; and some of the little girls sat down and enjoyed themselves so. The boys improved the occasion by piling one another up in struggling heaps on the grass, or in rolling down the slope which is in one corner of the ground. Invention at last soared to a game in which one of their number crawled on the ground covered with all the coats he could borrow, and was vigorously whacked with anything his companions could find, but this pastime had to be stopped because of its tendency to promote strife. A substitute, in the shape of a potato race, fell through in consequence of the premature disappearance of the potatoes.



Among the girls a game did at length spring into a tentative existence ; the old, old game of "kiss in the ring." It was strictly reserved to the modester sex ; and a young gentleman of four or five summers—it was he whose 'ad been give 'im—who attempted to join the game, was severely slapped by his sister in consequence.

" 'WE DON'T WANT NO BLOOMIN' GRYCE!'"

It made a funny little spectacle ; the children twirling round with flying skirts and wrinkled stockings, and hair becoming streakier with the exertion and singing—as if it were the multiplication table.—

"Nah you're married I wish you j'y,
Fust a gal and then a boy,
Seven years arfter son an' dorter,
Come young couple and kiss together."

But the young couple kissing together was generally rather a perfunctory performance, kissing not being very much in their line. It was generally apologised for by a giggle.

So the great day wore on ; the benevolent people commenced to go away ; the children began to get tired of it. Some of them wandered back in vague expectation to the refreshment tent, where the cups and the tea cans were now being packed up. Clifford saw the Egertons off and presently looked me up.

"Well, are you coming?" he asked.

"Wait a minute," I replied. "I think you ought to reward yourself with a glimpse at this Arcadian pastime of 'kiss in the ring.'"

"Oh, rubbish," returned Clifford.

"I don't believe you've seen it, Clifford. Come on. Besides there's some new development going on."

The tripping ring had been joined by a new figure—one of the teachers—a pallid, puffy young man with incipient side-whiskers ; and the children had stopped dancing. Part of them were gathered round the school-teacher and part round another smaller figure—in a terra-cotta frock.

The teacher held in his hand a bag, which he had apparently just emptied on to the grass. The contents were miscellaneous—two pieces of seed cake, some thick wedges of bread and jam stuck together, some knitting, four pieces of sugar, and half an apple.

"Clara Johnson says these are yours," the young man was saying. "Are they?"

"Yes, sir," said Carrie, beamingly, "thank you, sir."

He raised his voice a little—perhaps the better to create an impression.

"Then such conduct is disgraceful," he said. "What business had you to take them?"

She was still smiling, because she always smiled when she was spoken to, but her round eyes looked downwards towards her provisions with a sudden misgiving.

"You ought to be ashamed of such gluttony," he continued, aggressively. "I shall confiscate the bag and you will have to leave the ground."

The comprehensive smile still kept its place ; but as she caught sight of me and Clifford she flushed crimson, and a ridiculously big tear rolled unexpectedly towards the corner of her wide mouth.

Clifford had been behind me. As the teacher opened his mouth to reply to my angry remonstrance, he stepped in front of us both towards Mrs. Baily's apprentice. "I think you had

better come with me, Carrie," he said, gravely, and turned away.

She followed obediently after him at once, stumbling a little in the effort to keep up with his long legs. Then, to my amazement, as she hurried by his side, childlike, she reached up a grimy red hand to take his gloved one. I saw his face as he glanced down. I think he, too, was a little surprised. But he did not let go; and the incongruous pair went away together hand in hand.

An awed silence had fallen on our little group, presently broken by the whispered opinion of some of the children that Carrie was goin' to ketch it.

The pallid young man made an attempt to resume our interchange of remarks where it had left off. "Of course," he began, "discipline in these cases must——"

But my mind was too taken up with that queer picture of the terra-cotta frock going off with the grey frock coat, and the hand placed with so odd an instinct of confidence in Clifford's, to listen to the schoolmaster's views upon discipline, and I walked away.

It was about half an hour afterwards when I saw Carrie. She had quite recovered. If there had been any traces of her tears she had found some means of washing them off, and her face glistened again with its usual shine. She was not playing with the other children; but in default of companion had borrowed somebody else's baby to nurse. It was, I judged from the red shawl, the infant who had that day entered upon the distinction of wearing hair-oil for the first time. She had taken



off her hat and, with some hygienic idea of soothing the baby's slumbers, had laid it upon his face. She was, in fact, quite herself, and but for the gorgeous frock and sash, just as I had seen her many times in Clifford's rooms—even to the beaming smile with which she perceived that I noticed her. Clifford himself I saw a few minutes later, speaking to the schoolmaster. From the colloquy that pallid young man, I observed, emerged, looking rather yellower than before. Clifford came across to me.

"I suppose we might as well go," he said.

"Well, what did you say," I asked.

"I told him," replied Clifford, "a few of my opinions upon injudicious interference."

"You made yourself agreeable, I perceive," I said, "but what I meant was, what did you say to Carrie?"

Clifford did not reply directly. "Of course, you know what she wanted the cake for?"

"Well," I assented, "I can't say I should care about seed cake myself, but still——"

"She was bagging it for her brother," Clifford went on, "the poor little devil who didn't get a ticket for the Treat."

"Then that was——"

"She told me," concluded Clifford, "that she didn't have any tea herself, and she thought that would make up for it—make it all right, she said."

"Make it all right, sir; thank you, sir," I repeated half to myself; and looking over at the little handmaiden I became convinced that Clifford had understood how to make it all right better than anybody.



Watty Whyte.

BY ALEXANDER STUART.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY A. S. BOYD.

THERE is an inland parish of Scotland which lies at the foot of hills famous in Scottish story, and not many miles distant from what used to be called the Scottish sea. It has been claimed as the birthplace of one famous man, dead these many hundred years, the mark of whose influence has not yet passed away from Scottish life. In the old kirkyard the stones are green, some of them almost sunken out of sight, and the grass grows strong and coarse; but many a worthy man and woman have looked forward with composure to the day when they should be carried by unemotional friends to make their bed there for ever. Nevertheless, it is not a beautiful kirkyard, and on a wet day one would wish to be as far away from it as possible.

At the far end of the village from the smithy there is a broad market-place, with a stone cross in the centre, past which a road winds down to a picturesque bridge that hangs heavily over a wide, shallow stream. How Watty Whyte managed to start from this "brig" in a wee boat and sail in it all the way to Australia was a mystery to everyone but that profound genius himself. We had only his bare word for it that he had done so, but to some of us who had not learned to be sceptical, that was sufficient.

Watty Whyte was the minister's gardener, and a better delver never polished his spade in the soil. He was a long-limbed man, narrow-hipped, and round-shouldered, with scanty, grey whiskers on his red lank cheeks, and crazy blue eyes. He could, likewise, be a man of extraordinary taciturnity. The minister, or anybody else, might ask as many questions as he chose; Watty paid no attention. He would do as much as he was bid, except to open his mouth; yet if a stranger accosted him he would generally take the trouble to give some answer, but of such a kind as to make further conversation anything but promising. An Englishman on one occasion, having been told of Watty's peculiarities, made up to him as he was engaged in his favourite occupation. A funeral happened to be taking place in the village at the time, and the stranger seized upon the incident as a fair opening to conversation. "I noticed a funeral

in your churchyard as I came along," he said ; " do the people often die here? I understand it is a very healthy district." " No," said Watty, curtly, " they only die once in this part of the country." To the children he was a miracle of wisdom, but the grown-up people said he had been quite crazy ever since a young woman had falsely accused him of being the father of her child. It may have been, as the older people said, but the youngsters

had an immense admiration for him, and to them he would freely open the treasures of his knowledge. The oldest was only six years, but Watty spoke to them as if he were conscious of little difference between himself and them; and the staple of conversation was generally something

the minister was supposed to have said, and with which Watty could not possibly agree, for, besides being the minister's gardener, he was also his most unsparing critic. It was difficult for the minister to say anything which Watty had not good grounds for disbelieving, or for, at least, advancing a counter theory of his own which was always strikingly original, if not altogether convincing.

There was nothing about gardening that Watty did not think he knew, but he was always happiest when his spade was in his hands. Perhaps the turning of the earth had an ethical significance for

him, or he may have loved the smell of the fresh mould. The persistency with which he bent over the gleaming clods, hour after hour, made the spectator's back ache. One was forced to the conclusion that Watty's back was made of steel, and that he was proud of the fact. To the juvenile mind he irresistibly suggested our first parent. Hence there must have been spades in Eden.



" WATTY PAID NO ATTENTION."

"If Adam hadnae a spade," Watty used to say, handling his own as if it were a bamboo cane, "I wadnae gie a farden for him or his garden either. The minister can say what he likes, but I ken better. I've been tae the garden o' Eden; it's no' muckle bigger than this ane, but it was a' grown tae weeds and thistles; ye never saw siccan a sicht. Nae wonder he was putten oot o' the charge o' it. It's no' possible to dig a garden ower muckle. If I had my wull here, as I ought tae hae, I wad let ye see how a garden suld be derved. But I never get weel begun before I'm telled tae gang and dae something else. There's ower mony maisters in this garden; that's jist whaur the mischief is. But what's the guid o' speakin'. Ye micht as weel talk tae a stane dyke if ye wanted tae move it."

For reasons that were satisfactory to himself, Watty never went to church, and he kept his religious opinions very much to himself. He had always ready some simple explanation of all natural phenomena that interested him enough to make him look into their philosophy; and if his explanations were often grotesque, neither the speaker nor his childish audience were aware of it. Sunday was the most miserable day in the week to him, and he generally spent it in bed. But sometimes, when the minister had driven into another parish to conduct service there, Watty was careful to put in an appearance at the house in ample time to attend to the pony on his return. But he would not, on these occasions, wait in the kitchen until his services were required, although he might have done so had there been no women there. More than once, however, he was discovered in a secluded part of the garden turning up the earth with his spade, and evidently enjoying an unexpected luxury. When remonstrated with, he flung away his spade and answered indignantly:—

"D'ye think the grund kens Saturday frae Sunday? It maun be attended tae like onybody else. That's jist whaur everybody makes the mistake. They think it's a deid thing; but they ken naething aboot it, and I'm no' gaen tae stand here and argue the pint wi' ye. I'll no' get a chance like this again in a hurry, for the sparrows had a' gaen awa', thinking I wadnae be here."

"But why don't you go to the church, Watty? It must be a very miserable day for you, doing nothing."

"How can I gang tae the kirk," he answered impatiently, "when I ken as weel as I'm standing here that as sune as I

had sittin' doun on my seat the roof wad tumble in on the top o' me? Ye're free tae laugh if ye like, but I ken ower weel what wad happen. It's no' them that disnae suffer that has the richt to complain, and I'm the only ane that wad be killed. Ay, it's curious, but it's true; and I ken fine the reason o' it. The roof wadnae be able to bear the wecht o' sparrows that wad come and sit on it the moment they saw me gang in at

the door. As sune as they got a sough o' what I was gaen tae dae they wad come frae a' pairts o' the parish. Ye micht think they're no' sae heavy, but I ken better. If twa o' them were tae sit on yer breest a' nicht ye wad sune ken whether they were heavy or no'. I hae quite enough o' them on week-days wi'oot risking my neck tae hear them on Sundays. Dod on't! They'll never tak' their eyes off me. I'm no' sayin' a word agin' them. I ken them ower weel for that, and they ken me; but I'm no' gaen to the kirk."

"There is only one minister," six-year-old remarked, indignant at Watty's plural reference.

"Ay, that's what the minister thinks," Watty

scornfully answered. "He thinks a' the other ministers are deid. But I ken better, for they're aye keeking at me. What d'ye think happens tae a minister when he's deid? You dinnae ken, but I dae. They gang intae sparrows, and the hale lot o' them sit on the eaves o' the house yonder, keeking doun at me tae see that I'm daen my work. I can aye see them, and they can aye see me, though we never let on. There's naething they wad like better than to catch me making a mistake, but I'm ower gleg for them. I've seen as mony as twelve o' them



"'SOME DAY THEY'LL HAE THE BETTER O' ME.'"

sitting in a row, fat and lazy, for a hale day, watchin' me; and I've just worked a' the harder, tae spite them. But it cannae gang on for ever at this rate; and I'm feard that some day they'll hae the better o' me, for I'm no' sae young and soople as I used tae be, and then they'll either hae to gang awa' or I wull. I ken that fine and so dae they. It's a fecht between us wha's tae win, and I wadnae wonder, mind ye, if they were tae get tired o' it afore me."

But the sparrows never got tired. At least there were sparrows on the house-tops long after Watty had been carried to the kirkyard. And the gardener that reigned in his stead knew them not.



People I Have Never Met.

BY SCOTT RANKIN.

DR. JOSEPH PARKER.




"I don't believe in your doubters, honest or otherwise, or your freethinkers, or your sceptics. If young men read more, they would believe more; but they have a foolish idea that to be sceptical is to be clever."—DR. PARKER.

Astounding Episode at No. 9.

BY EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

ILLUSTRATED BY DUDLEY HARDY.

I.



ABOUT 2.45 a.m. one morning last winter, Mr. Adam Chilver, Dispensing Chemist, was aroused from sleep by a loud and incessant ringing at his front door bell.

The fact of Mr. Chilver's trade might have explained everything had No. 9, Maple Terrace, West Kensington, been connected with a stained-glass lamp or the compounding of noxious drugs at unhallowed hours ; but it was not.

Maple Terrace is a row of private dwelling houses which, since its earliest occupation, has acquired a reputation for gentility and moral tone that none, save the jealous dwellers in less seemly abodes, are ever heard to impeach. Externally, from area to smoke-cowl, the thirteen houses which go to complete Maple Terrace vie with one another in harmonious contest. And, for absolute perfection, No. 9 perhaps is unapproached. Internally, machine-like regularity and early hours are the watchwords. Here again No. 9 leads the van. No. 9 is absolutely and decisively asleep by eleven o'clock winter and summer. No. 9 goes to business every week-day at eight-thirty and to church twice every Sunday. No. 9 is a sidesman and holds the bag at his place of worship. No. 9 writes papers on moral topics and belongs to nearly every improving institution in the Hammersmith District. It is not, in fact, too much to say of Maple Terrace that it forms a crown for West Kensington, and of No. 9, that it is the chiefest jewel in that crown.

Having accented these peculiarities, you who read will the better realise what a veritable profanation of the entire neighbourhood this bell-ringing outrage must be considered ; and that such

a thunderbolt should have fallen upon No. 9 appears a most extraordinary climax to an astounding event.

At No. 13, for instance, there lived a young couple married scarcely a year. In this case, whilst deploring the disreputable hour chosen by any little new-comer for his advent in the terrace, that spotless row of residences would have doubtless bowed to the mysterious ways of Nature and extended a hand of fellowship in the morning. Even at No. 3, such a matter as the ringing of bells would not have caused overmuch attention; for there has always been a disagreeable flavour about the doings at No. 3. The inhabitants thereof wash at home and play the banjo. It will not quickly be forgotten either how they disgraced Maple Terrace at the glorious time of the Jubilee rejoicings. Then it was that the master of No. 3—a dairyman—hung upon his outward walls a banner with this hideous device:

"Fifty years of a spotless reign. Buy Pogson's cream-cheeses and you won't repent it!"

No. 3 is, indeed, a thorn in the side of Maple Terrace; but No. 9, we repeat, must be held the crowning glory of it.



So, when Mr. Adam Chilver heard this rough jangling and jingling, he arose, in tragic horror and dismay, scarcely caring or daring to believe he could be awake. "If it's waits, I'll summons them," he said aloud. Then he lighted a candle and hurried on a garment or two.

The bell continued ringing and clashing angrily and determinedly, rousing strange echoes in the silent house.

"It must be a conflagration," declared Mr. Chilver. But he did not leave his apartment until his attire was carefully adjusted, and his appearance altogether respectable. Then he opened his chamber door and walked out on to the landing.

The next moment a heavy hand came down on Mr. Chilver's candle, its fellow on Mr. Chilver's arm, and an excited voice whispered into his ear—

"It's the police. Don't make a row; I'm doing no harm. Go down and send those fools away—then I'll explain!"

Now, with the exception of himself, his daughter, and his

maid-of-all-work, no living soul had any business in No. 9 at such an hour. So Mr. Chilver shouted "Thieves!" and "Murder!" Thereupon a big palm closed the unhappy man's mouth, and the voice spoke again.

"How dare you talk about murder? What d'you take me for? It's all a mistake! Can explain everything! Don't be such an idiot! Go down and send them away at once! If you don't—hang it all—there'll be something to cry for!"

Chilver heard a click which, though he had never handled firearms in his life, conveyed a clear and horrible impression.

"Now cut down and stop that infernal riot! Don't mention me! It's all right! I'm not a robber, or a cut-throat, or anything of that kind—merely a harmless lunatic!"

Of course Chilver did not immediately comprehend his position. His first thought was to rush below and throw open his portals to the guardians of the peace who so eagerly demanded entrance. Then he reflected that the stranger—on his own showing a madman—might resent such an act, and possibly take some hasty and terrible step if he were disobeyed.

"Keep the chain up if there is one; don't think of letting them come in, or there may be murder in earnest!" said the voice out of the darkness, as Mr. Chilver went trembling downstairs.

That decided him. He had no objection to the notion of a policeman or two being shot in the execution of their duty; but his firm belief was that the midnight marauder would select him, Adam Chilver, as a mark; or he might even rush elsewhere, and exterminate Miss Chilver and the maid-of-all-work.

Then did a rattle of opening bolts and turning locks stay the clamour and the ringing and knocking at the door of No. 9. But there was a safety chain, and Mr. Chilver kept it up.

Several constables were collected on the door-step, and, with the greatest difficulty, Chilver curbed a natural, life-saving instinct to open his front door entirely, and fling himself into their arms. "Why d'you keep the force waiting for like this 'ere?" asked a man, flashing his bull's-eye lantern into the chemist's agitated face.



"What's all this ? What d'you want ? " inquired Mr. Chilver.

"There's burglars in your 'ouse or 'ave been—that's all ; but like enough they're 'ome again by now."

"No, they're—that is—absurd, stuff and nonsense. Go away, go away," said Mr. Chilver.

The force expressed some wishes as to their future state.

"Now, I put it to you, did you ever ? " asked a big policeman of his colleagues. One and all replied that, within their recollections, they "never did." Then the speaker turned on Mr. Chilver : "Absurd—eh ? Oh, all right. P'raps to 'ave your kitching window broke open and your property chucked out in the airey is absurd ? P'raps the police always watching public hinterests is absurd ? P'raps me, what am a standing 'ere talking to you, am absurd ? "

"Not at all—nothing of the sort. You are making much more of this affair than is necessary. I'll look round myself."

"You mean, straight out, you don't want us ? "

"That is exactly what I do mean," replied the chemist desperately. "I desire that you will withdraw. You can't enter a private house without a warrant, so there's an end of it."

"Is there an end of it ? We'll see. 'Ow do I know you're the master of this 'ouse ? You may be a burglar yourself, you may——"

"That's 'im all right," interrupted another constable—"that's Chilver."

"Well, Chilver, if you likes your goods to be spread hout to hauction in your blessed airey at three o'clock in the morning, that's your business. Only we've done with you, mind that. If you gets into trouble, it aint no good calling 'P'lice ! ' if you sees your grand pianoforte being lowered out of your drawing-room winder, it aint no good yelling for us ; if anybody wants to cut your throat or burn your 'ouse down they may, for all this 'ere force cares. We've done with you, so now you knows."

Chilver peered out at them silently. Then, feeling words were useless at this juncture, he suddenly shut the door, and bolted it.

An interview teeming with painful possibilities now awaited him.

"Have they gone ? That's all right," said a voice, as the chemist slowly returned to his upper floor.



"Yes, they've gone, though I had hard work to keep them out, I can tell you," answered Mr. Chilver. "Now, perhaps you had better be starting too. I've done you a good turn, so be off, and thank your stars you're not on the way to the lock-up. With the help of my dust-bin you can get over the back-garden wall. Then you will find yourself on a piece of land where they shoot rubbish. Follow me, please."

"You don't appear much interested in me."

"You said you would do no harm. Further than that I am not interested in you. Why should I be?"

"You mean you don't want any explanation?"

"There can only be one. You've been caught in the act of housebreaking, and I, like a sleepy-headed, soft-hearted fool, help you to escape, instead of giving you to the police. Now be off with you."

"Not at all. You must have an explanation, whether you want it or not. I owe it to myself."

Mr. Chilver had lost all fear now. He was getting extremely angry.

"I don't want your explanation, and I don't care two straws what you owe to yourself. It's perfectly monstrous your standing here in the dark, arguing with me. I won't have it. I shall catch my death of cold—that will be the end of it. For the last time: Are you going?"

"No, I'm not; so now you know. Light the candle, and keep your temper, and try and be courteous. I can't get a cab at this hour of the night, and I'm tired and sleepy and wretched, and I want something to eat."

"This is infamous—perfectly unheard of," gasped Mr. Chilver.

"Not at all. Light the candle, and let us understand one another."

Dazed and furious, the chemist did as he was bid. Then, in place of the forbidding monster he had expected—instead of a sinister, clean-shaven, bullet-headed, beetle-browed ruffian, armed to the teeth—his light revealed a tall, slim, fair young man, clad in evening dress. He carried a pistol in his hand, and his feet, cased in crimson socks, were shoeless. The flower in his coat looked seedy; his general air was disreputable and dilapidated; his shirt-



front suggested temporary repose in a coal-hole. But the youth appeared entirely at his ease. On becoming visible he blew his nose in a silk handkerchief that matched his socks, then put up an eye-glass and looked critically at the chemist.

"What's your name?" he enquired, yawning.

"A fairly respectable one up till now," answered Mr. Chilver bitterly.

"Perhaps you'll tell me yours," he continued.

"In good time, in good time. I explained that I was a harmless lunatic just now. Well, it's about the truth. You've got a gentleman to deal with, anyway. It might have been worse."

"Oh, much, of course. I'm very lucky, no doubt," said Chilver, with fine satire.

"May I ask, what is your objection to leaving my house, young man? What harm have I ever done you that you should come breaking in here and making night hideous like this?"

"I'll tell you everything to-morrow. Upon my soul I'm too dead beat to explain to-night. Now you've seen me, you know there's nothing to fear. Give me a shake-down somewhere. Be charitable. And I'm starving into the bargain."

"It's a nightmare, it must be. A thing of this sort never happened since the world began. It couldn't occur in Maple Terrace," said Mr. Chilver to himself.

"Just a mince-pie," suggested the stranger. "You must have them in the house, you know—just a mince-pie and a thimble of sherry, or anything. Then give me a corner to stretch out and have forty winks in. You shan't regret it."

"Come down stairs," said Mr. Chilver brusquely.

He led the way to the little kitchen.



The ordinary spic-and-span appearance of that apartment was much changed. The window, one pane of which had been removed, stood wide open, and a variety of portable utensils were arranged in the area outside.

"It looks bad, I admit," said the mysterious one casually,

"but you wait till to-morrow; you'll laugh when you hear my story."

"Yes, I expect I shall roar," said Mr. Chilver, examining the contents of his *larder*.

"This is a mince-pie, I believe," he continued; "but you can't have sherry or anything alcoholic—we're teetotalers here."

"From choice, or as an example to others?" asked the gentleman in evening dress, taking a bite of his mince-pie.

"Never mind; go on with your food," answered Chilver. He was getting his property back out of the area, and preparing to fasten his mutilated window.

"You couldn't light a fire, I suppose?"

"Not for you, or anybody living," answered the chemist.

"There's a lack of heartiness about you," said the stranger, calmly.

"Heartiness! What the plague is there to be hearty about? If I wasn't such a small man, and you such a big one, I'd have pitched you out of my house neck and crop half-an-hour ago."

"Disgusting," remarked the marauder. "Now, where shall I sleep?" he asked suddenly.

"Come upstairs again. Follow me."

Mr. Chilver led the way to his sitting-room.

"There," he said, pointing to a horse-hair sofa which made people ache to look at it; "that's the best I can do for you."

"It's not long enough," declared the tall man.

"We can add chairs to the end," said Mr. Chilver, suiting the action to the word. "Now get on to it, please, and go to sleep. I shall wake you at dawn. If you won't go, then I'll send for the police."

Even as he said the words, however, a horrible fear crossed the unhappy chemist's mind. Would the police come? Probably not. They had solemnly refused him all further assistance under any circumstances. The stranger tossed and turned while Mr. Chilver and the candle sat at the other end of the room, holding miserable vigil.

"I say, old man, this sofa's simply terrible. Couldn't you share your bed with me? Then we might both get a little sleep."

"No, I'm damned if I do," said Mr. Chilver.

Alas! Maple Terrace, over thy neat portals may the word "Ichabod" be placed; for No. 9 has sunk from his high estate; No. 9 has lost his temper; No. 9, though all the terrace sleeps, is awake and alive and trembling with passion; No. 9, in the dead silence of

the night, is sitting watching a tall, foolish-looking young man lying snoring with his mouth open; and No. 9 is murmuring language to himself that even No. 3 would have blushed to use. The mystery is wherever No. 9 learned such words.

II.

Miss Bessie Chilver became aware, at an early hour the next morning, that somebody was sharing her father's dressing-room, and that shaving water for two had already been conveyed thither. Jane, the domestic who furnished this thrilling information, was prepared with sundry other items of unique interest. A pair of dancing pumps (size nines) had been found in the kitchen; that chamber itself, together with the larder, was disordered beyond the vocabulary of a mere general servant to express. The sitting-room sofa had been manifestly slept upon—not that it showed the faintest trace of yielding, but a chaos of disordered rugs and chairs induced that belief. Lastly, Mr. Chilver had desired that a third place should be laid at the breakfast table.

The result of events so extraordinary was to reduce Miss Chilver to a condition of the utmost curiosity and excitement. Her life ran through rather a dull, monotonous country, and the prospects suddenly opened up by present concerns were full of novel interest.

At nine o'clock a procession entered the dining-room, headed by Mr. Chilver, and completed by his nocturnal visitor. The marauder was clad, as on the previous night, with the addition of his host's dressing gown—a garment that suggested some article of ecclesiastical ritual.



"'HOW D'YOU DO?' ASKED THE STRANGER."

Miss Chilver looked at the tall, thin figure, and then at her father.

"My daughter," said the chemist, "Mr. —?"

"How d'you do?" asked the stranger heartily, not mentioning his name.

Miss Chilver shook the hand extended to her. She noticed it was thin and delicately shaped, with a big gold ring upon the little finger of it.

"Jane," said Mr. Chilver, "call a cab."

"I shouldn't yet," remarked his guest, overhearing him. "Breakfast is rather an important meal with me, and I've got a full explanation to make, remember. I owe it to myself—and to you and your daughter."

They began their meal in profound silence. Miss Chilver poured out coffee, and the chemist cut some bread and opened a tin of sardines.

"May I send you an egg?" he enquired.

"By all means. I am particularly fond of them. You didn't expect a stranger to breakfast—eh, Miss Chilver?"

"No, indeed."

He went off into a long appreciative chuckle and began to eat. The repast progressed, and Mr. Chilver gradually dropped out of the conversation. He noticed, with some indignation, that his daughter appeared to find the new-comer exceedingly entertaining and was absurdly gracious. He also realised that the tall youth seemed to be a gentleman, if that was conceivable after his past actions. The young man chatted, without any ostentation, of a grade in society far removed from Maple Terrace. He made a handsome breakfast and loitered so extremely over it, that Mr. Chilver felt called upon to speak.

"If you have finished your meal," he said, "I venture to suggest that your long-delayed explanations be given. I must leave home in half-an-hour." Then he folded his arms and gazed blankly at the stranger with such a look as perchance Frankenstein cast at the weird monster of his creation.

"Chilver, you're a right good fellow," declared the other. "Yes," he continued, "I have finished my breakfast, and a very good breakfast too. Now I'll tell you everything. You've heard of Viscount Honeyball, I daresay. Well, I'm his son, his eldest son—you wouldn't think it—more would he if he'd seen me breaking into your place last night—but I am."

"Proceed," said Mr. Chilver, calmly; "nothing could surprise me now. I don't know what your correct title is," he added; "perhaps you will enlighten us."

"Oh, call me George."

Then the Honourable Charles George Flamank entered upon his extraordinary narrative.

"It was like this: I started last night from the club with a view to breaking in somewhere—it didn't matter where. I had a pistol and a thing to cut glass with, and I reckoned it was the simplest matter possible, if a man only kept cool."

"May I inquire why you set about such an undertaking?"

"Of course, that's the whole point of it; that's what I'm coming to. It was just midnight when I started. I never remember to have seen the streets so crowded as they were last night. There was no privacy or loneliness anywhere. Even the byroads and blind alleys were full of people, singing carols and one thing and another. It was a bad night to choose. Presently I broke a pane of glass in a coach-mews that seemed absolutely deserted. Something that I thought to be a pump, however, turned out to be a man, and the whole affair was very unsatisfactory. Theorising about housebreaking, and poisoning dogs, and slipping bolts, and using centre-bits, and so on, is jolly different from going out in the dark alone, and doing it. I gave the man, who ought to have been a pump, half-a-sovereign, and he said it would be all right. My own opinion is he had no sort of business there himself."

"But, if I may interrupt, you don't tell me the reason of this expedition. I cannot suppose a gentleman in your position deliberately set out to steal things that didn't belong to you."

"Yes I did, Chilver. That's the whole point. I'm coming to that. Well, I pottered about looking for a place to break in to. The way policemen move you on, if you dawdle at night, is extraordinary. I reached Melbury Road at last, and made a half-hearted attempt to get through a back window in the house of an artistic chap I know slightly. I thought I could explain it to the artistic chap if he caught me. But a brute of a dog began barking, and I heard the artistic chap coming down stairs three steps at a time, so I pushed on. I walked for miles, until I found myself in this street. Then, being fairly tired out and desperate and hungry and angry with myself and everybody, I went down into an area, which happened to be yours, and determined to get into the house or perish in the attempt."

"I still fail to understand the reason for a course of action so unparalleled," said Mr. Chilver. "You declare that your deliberate intention was robbery. But if you have grave debts

and difficulties, as every young man in your position in life has, I believe, surely you cannot have supposed that you would find anything in this modest house of sufficient value to be worth the removing."



"Ah, that's the whole point. I'm coming to that. The moment I got down into your area a constable passed. He stopped just above me, and I thought it was all up. By a miracle I escaped. When he had gone I took the thing to cut glass with, and attacked your kitchen window. Half a pane of glass came out in my hand, and I cut my thumb in a way which may end in lock-jaw yet, for all I know. But, finally, the window flew open, and I found myself inside. I put a few portable things—boots and so forth—in the area, so that I might catch up something and fly with it if discovered. Then, feeling wonderfully cool and collected, I began to explore. I was just exploring about by Mr. Chilver's door on the second landing, when the police started battering and ringing. They must have seen the kitchen window and the odds and ends I had arranged in the area. Then, out you came, Chilver, and met me. You saw it was all a mistake, and went down and sent the beggars about their business, and asked me to stop and put me up for the night—very good of you too."

"Perhaps now, you will explain your reasons," suggested the chemist.

"Of course—that's the whole point. I never went in for burglary before, and never shall again. We were at the Club, as I told you—a dozen of us at least. We talked about murder and

housebreaking, and what an easy business it was. I said it seemed simply child's play to me. Then a johnny bet me—he bets about everything—that I wouldn't break in somewhere and st— just take a trifle not worth less than a sovereign and get clear off. He bet me two to one in hundreds, and I took him and started there and then. And now it's all over, and I've lost."

"You came here last night and upset my household, simply to win a wager?"

"Yes; you needn't have made such a fuss, you see."

"Fuss!" said Mr. Chilver; "the question is: shall I summons you?"

"Don't!" urged the Honourable Charles. "What's the use? It's all over and no harm done to anybody. I'll pay for the window. What d'you say, Miss Chilver?"

"It's church-time," she answered.

"I'll come, if you like. Have you got a 'sitting' anywhere?"

"You can't, and you shan't," declared Mr. Chilver, warmly. "You couldn't go to church like that if you were a Prince of the blood. Jane, call a cab."

"Hardly yet, I think. You see it's out of the question my going until after dark. I should be hooted or stoned or taken to a lunatic asylum if I started like this. But don't mind me. You go off to church and enjoy yourselves. I'll make myself at home."

"Going to stop all day, you mean?" gasped the chemist.

"What can I do? I put it to Miss Chilver." Bessie caught her father's eye, and his appearance was so excruciatingly comic that she laughed.

"It's no laughing matter, Miss," burst out the little man; "there never was such a thing happened in this world before. You must be dead to every decent feeling, I should think," he added, turning on the Honourable Charles.

"Let your daughter decide," answered that youth, putting up his eyeglass.

"Oh, you'll stop if you want to, I know," answered Chilver, bitterly. "If you think it desirable to spend your Sunday with people who haven't invited you, and don't want you—if you consider it in keeping with your position to quarter yourself unasked on a pharmaceutic chemist—in quite a small way—and his daughter—why there's an end of it. Bessie, put on your things and come to church. I'll thank you, at any rate, not to show yourself in the window while the people are passing to places of worship. On

that table you will find a few pamphlets I have written for the use of young men. It wouldn't do you much harm to read them."

"I will. I like a little solid reading after breakfast."

It may be unnecessary to state that Mr. Chilver's performances that morning as a churchwarden, sidesman, and church-worker lacked their usual finish. Nor did Miss Bessie shine as usual in Sunday-school. Her versions of certain Scriptural narratives were disjointed and vague, and seemed to show a lack of familiarity with the originals.

After their labours father and daughter returned in somewhat more peaceful mind, and their tranquillity was almost entirely restored when they discovered that their guest had changed his intentions and taken himself off. He left a note in pencil:

Dear Chilver,—

The tracts did it. Dynamite wouldn't have, but your pamphlets were too much. Do be more tolerant and charitable. Let me have your City address at the "Constitutional," and I'll buy anything you like to sell me. I shall pull the cab blinds down and may get home unobserved. Better not talk about me.

Yours,

GEORGE.

Mr. Chilver called a council of war.

"It will be desirable," said he, "that, as this young man suggests, we make no further mention of this disgraceful episode. The whole affair is an outrage, and the sooner forgotten the better. Not a word, my child, to a soul. Jane, don't talk over the wall if you wish to keep your place."

Two days later, a magnificent bouquet of exotics arrived at No. 9, Maple Terrace, for Miss Chilver, and a box of exceptional cigars reached her father. But he had never smoked in his life, and was not going to begin then.

So here ends this veracious account of a lamentable event. I should never have divulged Mr. Chilver's secret had not circumstances made it desirable to do so. The affair leaked out, of course, and the people at No. 3 spread a garbled report full of malignant details. But this recital, if it does nothing more, will at least confound the people at No. 3.





"CRASH WENT ONE OF HIS HEELS THROUGH THE CARRIAGE WINDOW!"

*The Stark Munro Letters.**

BY A. CONAN DOYLE.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE HUTCHINSON.

VI.

I, THE PARADE, BRADFIELD,

March 7th, 1882.

It is only two days since I wrote to you, my dear chap, and yet I find myself loaded to the muzzle and at full cock again. I have come to Bradfield, I have seen old Cullingworth once more, and I have found that all he has told me is true. Yes, incredible as it sounded, this wonderful fellow seems to have actually built up a great practice in little more than a year. He really is, with all his eccentricities, a very remarkable man, Bertie. He doesn't seem to have a chance of showing his true powers in this matured civilisation. The law and custom hamper him. He is the sort of fellow who would come right to the front in a French Revolution. Or if you put him as Emperor over some of those little South American States, I believe that in ten years he would either be in his grave, or would have the Continent. Yes, Cullingworth is fit to fight for a higher stake than a medical practice, and on a bigger stage than an English provincial town. Have you read about Aaron Burr in American history? I always picture him as a man like C.

I had the kindest of leave-takings from Horton. If he had been my brother he could not have been more affectionate. I could not have thought that I should grow so fond of a man in so short a time. He takes the keenest interest in my venture, and I am to write him a full account. He gave me, as we parted, a black old meerschaum, which he had coloured himself—the last possible pledge of affection from a smoker. It was cheering for me to feel that if all went wrong at Bradfield, I had a little harbour at Merton for which I could make. Still, of course, pleasant and instructive as the life there was, I could not shut my eyes to the fact that it would take a terribly long time before I could save enough to buy a share in a practice—a longer time, probably, than my poor father's strength would last. That telegram of Cullingworth's in which, as you may

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remember, he guaranteed me three hundred pounds in the first year, gave me hopes of a much more rapid career. You will agree with me, I am sure, that I did wisely to go to him.

I had an adventure upon the way to Bradfield. The carriage in which I was travelling contained a party of three, at whom I took the most casual of glances before settling down to the daily paper. There was an elderly lady, with a bright rosy face, gold spectacles, and a dash of red velvet in her bonnet. With her were two younger people, whom I took to be her son and her daughter—the one a quiet, gentle-looking girl of twenty or so, dressed in black, and the other a short thick-set young fellow, a year or two older. The two ladies sat by each other in the far corner, and the son (as I presume him to be) sat opposite me. We may have travelled an hour or more without my paying any attention to this little family party, save that I could not help hearing some talk between the two ladies. The younger, who was addressed as Winnie, had, as I noticed, a very sweet and soothing voice. She called the elder “mother,” which showed that I was right as to the relationship.

I was sitting, then, still reading my paper, when I was surprised to get a kick on the shins from the young fellow opposite. I moved my legs, thinking that it was an accident, but an instant afterwards I received another and a harder one. I dropped my paper with a growl, but the moment that I glanced at him I saw how the matter stood. His foot was jerking spasmodically, his two hands clenched and drumming against his breast, while his eyes were rolling upwards until only the rim of his iris was to be seen. I sprang upon him, tore open his collar, unbuttoned his waistcoat, and pulled his head down upon the seat. Crash went one of his heels through the carriage window, but I contrived to sit upon his knees while I kept hold of his two wrists.

“Don’t be alarmed!” I cried, “it’s epilepsy, and will soon pass!”

Glancing up, I saw that the little girl was sitting very pale and quiet in the corner. The mother had pulled a bottle out of her bag, and was quite cool and helpful.

“He often has them,” said she; “this is bromide.”

“He is coming out,” I answered. “You look after Winnie.”

I blurted it out, because her head seemed to rock as if she were going off; but the absurdity of the thing struck us all

next moment, and the mother burst into a laugh, in which the daughter and I joined. The son had opened his eyes and had ceased to struggle.

"I must really beg your pardon," said I, as I helped him up again. "I had not the advantage of knowing your other name, and I was in such a hurry that I had no time to think what I was saying."

They laughed again in the most good-humoured way, and, as soon as the young fellow had recovered, we all joined in quite a confidential conversation. It is wonderful how the intrusion of any of the realities of life brushes away the cobwebs of etiquette. In half an hour we knew all about each other, or, at any rate, I knew all about them. Mrs. La Force was the mother's name, a widow with these two children. They had given up housekeeping, and found it more pleasant to live in apartments, travelling from one watering place to another. Their one trouble was the nervous weakness of the son Francis. They were now on their way to Birchespool, where they hoped that he might get some good from the bracing air. I was able to recommend vegetarianism, which I have found to act like a charm in such cases. We had quite a spirited conversation, and I think that we were sorry on both sides when we came to the junction where they had to change. Mrs. La Force gave me her card, and I promised to call if ever I should be in Birchespool. I don't suppose there's much chance of it, but I should like to see the little girl again.

All this must be stupid enough to you. You know my little ways by this time, and you don't expect me to keep on the main line of my story. However, I am back on the rails now, and I shall try to remain there.

Well, it was nearly six o'clock, and evening was just creeping in, when we drew up in Bradfield station. The first thing I saw when I looked out of the window was old Cullingworth, exactly the same as ever, striding in his jerky way down the platform, his coat flying open, his chin thrust forward (he is the most underhung man I have ever seen), and his great teeth all gleaming like a good-natured bloodhound. He roared with delight when he saw me, wrung my hand, and slapped me enthusiastically upon the shoulder.

"My dear chap," said he, "we'll clear this town out. I tell you, Munro, we won't leave a doctor in it. It's all they can do now to get butter to their bread, and when we get to work

together they'll have to eat it dry. Listen to me, my boy ! There are a hundred and twenty thousand folk in this town, all shrieking for advice, and there isn't a doctor who knows a rhubarb pill from a calculus. Man, we have only to gather them in. I stand and take the money until my arm aches."

"But how is it?" I asked, as we pushed our way through the crowd. "Are there so few other doctors?"

"Few!" he roared. "By Crums, the streets are blocked with them. You couldn't fall out of a window in this town without killing a doctor. But of all the—well, there, you'll see them for yourself. You walked to my house at Avonmouth, Munro. I don't let my friends walk to my house at Bradfield—eh, what?"

A well-appointed carriage, with two fine black horses, was drawn up at the station entrance. The smart coachman touched his hat as Cullingworth opened the door.

"Which of the houses, sir?" he asked.

Cullingworth's eyes shot round to me to see what I thought of such a query. Between ourselves, I have not the slightest doubt that he had instructed the man to ask it. He always had a fine eye for effect, but he usually erred by underrating the intelligence of those around him.

"Ah," said he, rubbing his chin like a man in doubt. "Well, I daresay dinner will be nearly ready. Drive to the town residential."

"Good gracious, Cullingworth!" said I, as we started. "How many houses do you inhabit? It sounds as if you had bought the town."

"Well, well," said he, laughing, "we are driving to the house where I usually live. It suits us very well, though I have not been able to get all the rooms furnished yet. Then I have a little farm of a few hundred acres just outside the city. It is a pleasant place for the week-ends, and we send the nurse and the child—"

"My dear chap, I did not know that you had started a family!"

"Yes, it's an infernal nuisance; but still, we must make the best of it. We get our butter and things from the farm. Then, of course, I have my house of business in the heart of the city."

"Consulting and waiting room, I suppose?"

He looked at me with a sort of half-vexed, half-amused expression. "You cannot rise to a situation, Munro," said he.

"I never met a fellow with such a stodgy imagination. I'd trust you to describe a thing when you have seen it, but never to build up an idea of it beforehand."

"What's the trouble now?" I asked.

"Well, I've written to you about my practice, and I've wired to you about it, and here you sit asking me if I work it in two rooms. I'll have to hire the market square before I've finished, and then I won't have space to wag my elbows. Can



"EAT BREAD-AND-TREACLE ON THE DOORSTEP."

your imagination rise to a great house with people waiting in every room, jammed in as tight as they'll fit, and two layers of them squatting in the cellar. Well, that's my house of business on an average day. The folk come in from the country fifty miles off, and eat bread-and-treacle on the doorstep, so as to be first in when the housekeeper comes down. The medical officer of health made an official complaint of the overcrowding of my waiting rooms. They wait in the stables, and sit along the

racks and under the horses' bellies. I'll turn some of 'em on to you, my boy, and then you'll know a little more about it."

Well, all this puzzled me a good deal, as you can imagine, Bertie; for, making every allowance for Cullingworth's inflated way of talking, there must be something at the back of it. I was just thinking to myself that I must keep my head cool, and have a look at everything with my own eyes, when the carriage pulled up and we got out.

"This is my little place," said Cullingworth.

It was the corner house of a line of fine buildings, and looked to me much more like a good-sized hotel than a private mansion. It had a broad sweep of steps leading up to the door, and towered away up to five or six storeys with pinnacles and a flagstaff on the top. As a matter of fact, I learned that before Cullingworth took it it had been one of the chief clubs in the town, but the committee had abandoned it on account of the heavy rent. A smart maid opened the door, and a moment later I was shaking hands with Mrs. Cullingworth, who was all kindness and cordiality. She has, I think, forgotten the little Avonmouth business, when her husband and I fell out.

The inside of the house was even huger than I had thought from the look of the exterior. There were over thirty bedrooms, Cullingworth informed me, as he helped me to carry my portmanteau upstairs. The hall and first stair were most excellently furnished and carpeted, but it all ran to nothing at the landing. My own bedroom had a little iron bed, and a small basin standing on a packing-case. Cullingworth took a hammer from the mantelpiece, and began knocking in nails behind the door.

"These will do to hang your clothes on," said he. "You don't mind roughing it a little until we get things in order?"

"Not in the least."

"You see," he explained, "there's no good my putting a forty-pound suite into a bedroom, and then having to chuck it all out of the window in order to make room for a hundred-pound one. No sense in that, Munro! Eh, what? I'm going to furnish this house as no house has ever been furnished. By Crums! I'll bring the folk from a hundred miles round just to have leave to look at it. But I must do it room by room. Come on down and look at the dining-room. You must be hungry after your journey."

It really was furnished in a marvellous way—nothing flash

and everything magnificent. The carpet was so rich that my feet seemed to sink into it as into deep moss. The soup was on the table and Mrs. Cullingworth sitting down, but he kept hauling me round to look at something else.

"Go on, Hetty," he cried over his shoulder, "I just want to show Munro this. Now these plain dining-room chairs, what d'you think they cost each? Eh, what?"

"Five pounds," said I at a venture.

"Exactly," he cried, in great delight; "thirty pounds for the six. You hear, Hetty, Munro guessed the price first shot. Now, my boy, what for the pair of curtains?"

They were a magnificent pair of stamped crimson velvet, with a two-foot gilt cornice above them. I thought that I had better not imperil my newly-gained reputation by guessing.

"Eighty pounds!" he roared, slapping them with the back of his hand. "Eighty pounds, Munro; what d'ye think of that! Everything that I have in this house is going to be of the best. Why, look at this waiting-maid! Did you ever see a neater one?"

He swung the girl towards me by the arm. "Don't be silly, Jimmy," said Mrs. Cullingworth mildly, while he roared with laughter, all his fangs flashing under his bristling moustache. The girl edged closer to her mistress, looking half-frightened and half-angry.

"All right, Mary, no harm!" he cried. "Sit down, Munro, old chap. Get a bottle of champagne, Mary, and we'll drink to more luck."

Well, we had a very pleasant little dinner. It is never slow if Cullingworth is there. He is one of those men who make a kind of magnetic atmosphere about them so that you feel exhilarated and stimulated in their presence. His mind is so nimble and his thoughts so extravagant, that your own break away from their usual grooves, and surprise you by their activity. You feel pleased at your own inventiveness and originality, when you are really like the wren when it took a lift on the eagle's shoulder. Old Peterson, you remember, used to have a similar effect upon you in the Linlithgow days.

In the middle of dinner he plunged off, and came back with a round bag about the size of a pomegranate in his hand.

"What d'ye think this is, Munro? Eh?"

"I have no idea."

"Our day's take. Eh, Hetty?" He undid a string, and in

an instant a pile of gold and silver rattled down upon the cloth,



"HE UNDOID A STRING."

the coins whirling and clinking among the dishes. One rolled off the table and was retrieved by the maid from some distant corner.

"What is it, Mary? A half-sovereign? Put it in your pocket. What did the lot come to, Hetty?"

"Thirty-one pound eight."

"You see, Munro. One day's work." He plunged his hand into his trouser pocket and brought out a pile of sovereigns which he balanced in his palm. "Look at that, laddie. Rather different from my Avonmouth form. Eh, what?"

"It will be good news for them," I suggested.

He was scowling at me in an instant with all his old ferocity. You cannot imagine a more savage-looking creature than Cullingworth is when his temper goes wrong. He gets a perfectly fiendish expression in his light blue eyes, and all his hair bristles up like a cobra's hood. He isn't a beauty at his best, but at his worst he's really phenomenal. At the first danger signal his wife had ordered the maid from the room.

"What rot you do talk, Munro," he cried. "Do you suppose I am going to cripple myself for years by letting those debts hang on to me?"

"I understood that you had promised," said I. "Still, of course, it is no business of mine."

"I should hope not," he cried. "A tradesman stands to win or to lose. He allows a margin for bad debts. I would have paid it if I could. I couldn't, and so I wiped the slate clean. No one in his senses would dream of spending all the money that I make in Bradfield upon the tradesmen of Avonmouth."

"Suppose they come down upon you?"

"Well, we'll see about that when they do. Meanwhile, I am paying ready money for every mortal thing that comes up the door-steps. They think so well of me here that I could have had the whole place furnished like a palace from the drain-pipes to the flagstaff, only I determined to take each room in turn when I was ready for it. There's nearly four hundred pounds under this one ceiling."

There came a tap at the door, and in walked a boy in buttons.

"If you please, sir, Mr. Duncan wishes to see you."

"Give my compliments to Mr. Duncan, and tell him he may go to the devil."

"My dear Jimmy!" cried Mrs. Cullingworth.

"Tell him I am at dinner, and if all the kings in Europe were waiting in the hall with their crowns in their hands, I wouldn't cross that door-mat to see them."

The boy vanished, but was back in an instant.

"Please, sir, he won't go."

"Won't go! What d'you mean?" Cullingworth sat with his mouth open and his knife and fork sticking up. "What d'you mean, you brat? What are you boggling about?"

"It's his bill, sir," said the frightened boy.



"TELL HIM I'LL SHRED HIM OVER THE PARISH."

Cullingworth's face grew dusky, and the veins began to swell on his forehead.

"His bill, eh! Look here!" He took his watch out and laid it on the table. "It's two minutes to eight. At eight I'm coming out, and if I find him there I'll strew the street with him."

Tell him I'll shred him over the parish. He has two minutes to save his life in, and one of them is nearly gone."

The boy bolted from the room, and in an instant afterwards we heard the bang of the front door, with a clatter of steps down the stairs. Cullingworth lay back in his chair and roared until the tears shone on his eye-lashes, while his wife quivered all over with sympathetic merriment.

"I'll drive him mad," Cullingworth sobbed at last. "He's a nervous, chicken-livered kind of man, and when I look at him he turns the colour of putty. When I pass his shop I usually just drop in and stand and look at him. I never speak, but just look. It paralyses him. Sometimes the shop is full of people, but it is just the same."

"Who is he, then?" I asked.

"He's my corn-merchant. I was saying that I paid my tradesmen as I go, but he is the only exception. He has done me once or twice, you see, and so I try to take it out of him. By the way, you might send him down twenty pounds to-morrow, Hetty. It's time for an instalment."

What a gossip you will think me, Bertie. But when I begin my memory brings everything back so clearly, and I write on and on almost unconsciously. Besides, this fellow is such a mixture of qualities that I could never give you any idea of him by myself, and so I just try to repeat to you what he says and what he does, so that you may build up your own picture of the man. I know that he has always interested you, and that he does so more now than ever, since our fates have drawn us together again.

After dinner we went into the back room, which was the most extraordinary contrast to the front one, having only a plain deal table and half-a-dozen kitchen chairs scattered about on a linoleum floor. At one end was an electric battery and a big magnet. At the other, a packing-case with several pistols and a litter of cartridges upon it. A rook rifle was leaning up against it, and, looking round, I saw that the walls were all pocked with bullet marks.

"What's this, then?" I asked, rolling my eyes round.

"Hetty, what's this?" he asked, with his pipe in his hand and his head cocked sideways.

"Naval supremacy and the command of the seas," said she, like a child repeating a lesson.

"That's it," he shouted, stabbing at me with the amber.

“Naval supremacy and command of the seas. It's all here, right under your nose. I tell you, Munro, I could go to Switzerland to-morrow, and I could say to them, ‘Look here, you haven't got a



“‘A MILLION POUNDS!’”

seaboard and you haven't got a port; but just give me a ship, and gum your flag on it, and I'll give you every ocean under heaven.' I'd sweep the seas until there wasn't a matchbox floating on them. Or I could make them over to a limited company

and join the board after allotment. I hold the salt water in the cup of this hand, every drop of it."

His wife put her hands on his shoulders with admiration in her eyes. I turned to knock out my pipe and grinned over the grate.

"Oh, you may grin," said he. (He was wonderfully quick at spotting what you were doing). "You'll grin a little wider when you see the dividends coming in. What's the value of that magnet?"

"A pound?"

"A million pounds. Not a penny under. And dirt cheap to the nation that buys it. I shall let it go at that, though I could make ten times as much if I held on. I shall take it up to the Secretary of the Navy in a week or two, and if he seems to be a civil, deserving sort of person, I shall do business with him. It's not every day, Munro, that a man comes into his office with the Atlantic under one arm and the Pacific under the other. Eh, what?"

I knew it would make him savage, but I lay back in my chair and laughed until I was tired. His wife looked at me reproachfully, but he, after a moment of blackness, burst out laughing also, stamping up and down the room and waving his arms.

"Of course it seems absurd to you," he cried. "Well, I daresay it would to me if any other fellow had worked it out. But you may take my word for it that it's all right. Hetty here will answer for it. Won't you, Hetty?"

"It's splendid, dear."

"Now, I'll show you, Munro, what an unbelieving Jew you are, trying to look interested and giggling at the back of your throat. In the first place, I have discovered a method—which I won't tell you—of increasing the attractive power of a magnet a hundred-fold. Have you grasped that?"

"Yes."

"Very good. You are also aware, I presume, that modern projectiles are either made of or tipped with steel. It may possibly have come to your ears that magnets attract steel. Permit me now to show you a small experiment." He bent over his apparatus and I suddenly heard the snapping of electricity. "This," he continued, going across to the packing-case, "is a saloon pistol, and will be exhibited in the museums of the next century as being the weapon with which the new era was in-

augurated. Into the breech I place a Boxer cartridge, specially provided for experimental purposes with a steel bullet. I aim



"I FIRE!"

point-blank at the dab of red sealing wax upon the wall, which is four inches above the magnet. I am an absolutely dead shot. I fire. You will now advance and satisfy yourself that the bullet

is flattened upon the end of the magnet, after which you will apologise to me for that grin."

I looked, and it certainly was as he had said.

"I'll tell you what I would do," he cried. "I am prepared to put that magnet in Hetty's bonnet and to let you fire six shots straight at her face. How's that for a test? You wouldn't mind, Hetty? Eh, what?"

I don't think she would have objected, but I hastened to disclaim any share in such an experiment.

"Of course, you see that the whole thing is to scale. My war-ship of the future carries at her prow and stern a magnet which shall be as much larger than that as the big shell will be larger than this tiny bullet. Or I might have a separate raft, possibly, to carry my apparatus. My ship goes into action. What happens then, Munro; eh, what? Every shot fired at her goes smack on to the magnet. There's a reservoir below into which they drop when the electric circuit is broken. After every action they are sold by auction for old metal and the result divided as prize-money among the crew. But think of it, man. I tell you it is an absolute impossibility for a shot to strike any ship which is provided with my apparatus. And then, look at the cheapness. You don't want armour. You want nothing. Any ship that floats becomes invulnerable with one of these. The war-ship of the future will cost anything from seven pound ten. You're grinning again, but if you give me a magnet and a Brixton trawler with a seven-pounder gun, I'll show sport to the finest battle-ship afloat."

"Well, there must be some flaw about this," I suggested. "If your magnet is so strong as all that, you would have your own broadside boomeranging back upon you."

"Not a bit of it. There's a big difference between a shot flying away from you with all its muzzle velocity, and another one which is coming towards you and only needs a slight deflection to strike the magnet. Besides, by breaking the circuit I can take off the influence when I am firing my own broadside. Then I connect, and instantly become invulnerable."

"And your nails and screws?"

"The war-ship of the future will be bolted together by wood."

Well, he would talk of nothing else the whole evening but of this wonderful invention of his. Perhaps there is nothing in it, probably there is not; and yet it illustrates the many-sided nature

of the man that he should not say one word about his phenomenal success here, of which I am naturally most anxious to hear, not a word either upon the important subject of our partnership, but will think and talk of nothing but this extraordinary naval idea. In a week he will have tossed it aside in all probability, and be immersed in some plan for reuniting the Jews and settling them in Madagascar. Yet from all he has said, and all I have seen, there can be no doubt that he has in some inexplicable way made a tremendous hit, and to-morrow I shall let you know all about it. Come what may, I am delighted that I came, for things promise to be interesting. Regard this not as the end of a letter, but of a paragraph. You shall have the conclusion to-morrow, or on Thursday at the latest. Good-bye, and my remembrances to Lawrence if you see him. How's your friend from Yale?

(To be continued.)



Round About Algiers.

By C. STEWART.



CAMELS.

FROM the sea-approach, as you glide into the beautiful harbour, Algiers presents a very distinctly Oriental appearance. The town rises on the side of a steep hill in a series of dazzling white terraces formed by rows upon rows of flat-roofed Moorish houses. Here and there is the dome of a mosque, or the beautiful fretted tower of a minaret.

Algiers has been in possession of the French for rather more than half-a-century, and they have signalled their ownership by knocking down the more picturesque parts of it on the sea-front, and patriotically erecting a few *boulevards*. The French town of Algiers is possibly intended to resemble Paris. It is not attractive in itself, but offers a curious and complicated study from a racial point of view. Jews, Turks, and infidels are all there, but they are a mere drop in the ocean amid the heterogeneous muddle of races which jostle each other in these noisy streets.

The Arab town—the real Algiers—is altogether very much more satisfactory than the spurious French edition. Here you have true Oriental architecture—houses built round inner, arcaded courtyards, and with the flat roofs where so much of the family lounging is done. Here you have the Moorish arch, the Arab doorway, the steps and stairways lined with Persian tiles. Here you have the narrow, dirty streets—an inextricable network of passages—sometimes dark, and always steep. Here you have the little open shops with the merchants sitting cross-legged at the entrances; and here you have the tiny Oriental market-places stored with oranges and bananas, grapes, figs, and dates. Here, above all, you have the Arab

smell—one of the most thoroughly sufficing things in creation. You cannot tell what are its component parts ; but once smelt it is never forgotten.

In the Arab town the native is at his best, with his proper background. There are several kinds of him, ranging in complexion from the coal-black of the Soudanese negro to the artistic coffee-colour of the common or indigenous Arab. But in every variety he is perfectly and delightfully barbaric—all that the fancy could ever possibly have painted him in the matter of picturesqueness, local colour, costume, and dirt.

The Algerian female, alas ! is not beautiful, as a rule, but is a melancholy reality with clumsy form, swaddled in shapeless



ARAB TOMBS, NEAR ALGIERS.

draperies of a dubious white, which slop about in the down-at-heel, waddling fashion characteristic of the place. The ladies have obviously rather a bad time of it here, for the Tyrant, Man, still keeps the upper hand, and swaggers through the streets with the haughty gestures, and bold roving glance which seem, somehow, to be the birthright of the Oriental. The women, huddled under their veils, shuffle about as if they were ashamed to be seen, dragging heavy market-baskets, and cackling forlornly in twos and threes, like so many draggle-tailed, dissatisfied hens. When a man wants a wife he buys a suitable person from her father. She is expected to keep his house, do his marketing, and cook the food. If she fails to give satisfaction, the lady is



THE FRENCH QUARTER.



A NATIVE HUT.



THE GREAT MOSQUE.



THE ARAB QUARTER.



THE MARKET PLACE.

returned to the paternal roof with criticisms of a more or less uncomplimentary nature; but if she finds favour, she is retained, and may in time reap the inestimable privilege of becoming the servant of her successor, or else the nurse of her son's children. It is needless to say that "women's rights" are unknown in the East.

There are many expeditions to be made from Algiers, by carriage, on horseback, and by train. The horses are native to the country, but do not come up to the customary ideal of the Arab steed. They are



ARAB GIRL.

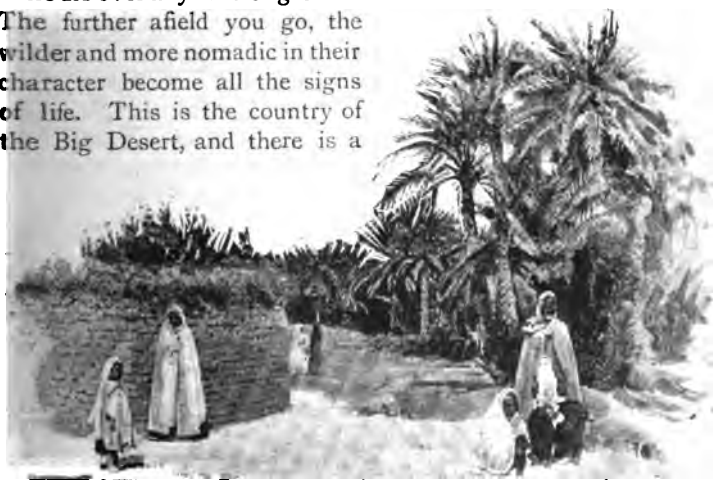


NATIVE DILIGENCE.

scraggy, ewe-necked, vicious-looking brutes, but they can go. When you have arranged your person on the back of your particular

steed so that he cannot turn round and bite any portion of it, he will carry you for any number of hours over any kind of ground.

The further afield you go, the wilder and more nomadic in their character become all the signs of life. This is the country of the Big Desert, and there is a



A BIT OF BISKRA

wonderful place called Biskra (about two days' rail from Algiers) which everybody goes to see. It is on the Sahara, in an oasis—a very curious place where the camel and the date-palm flourish on their native sands. "The lion's roar," says the awestruck guide-book, "has been heard at Biskra." But that must have been a long time ago, when the lion was less exclusive than he is now.



ARABS ON THE MARCH.

THE IDLER'S CLUB



SKATING STORIES

BY FRANCIS FREMANTLE, BENNETT COLL, HENRY HARLAND,
ARCHIE ARMSTRONG, FRANCIS GRIBBLE, AND PETT RIDGE.

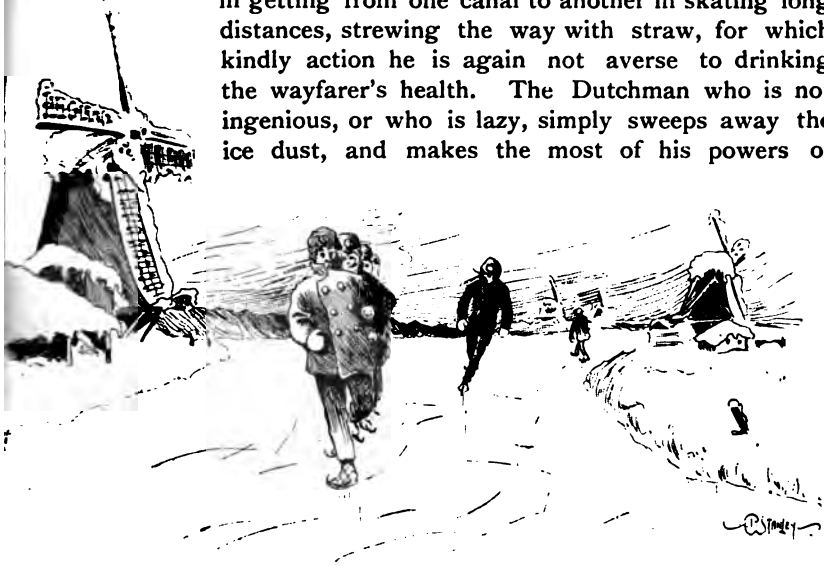
ILLUSTRATIONS BY LOUIS GUNNIS, PENRYN STANLEY, AND
SYDNEY HARVEY.

Francis Fremantle journeys into a strange land.

Skating is, of course, a characteristic feature of Holland. Everyone knows the old Dutch pictures of the booths on the ice, like that of Peter de Hoog's, in the National Gallery, with the plain white houses, and a brick church at the back, a barge or two frozen up, and the populace at large on skates. But it is quite a fallacy to suppose that Holland is in a perpetual state of frost during the winter. Dutch weather varies as much as our own, with the thermometer just a few degrees lower, and last winter there was very little frost in the south of the country. But when the frost comes, Dutchmen are on the ice at once. The men skate in to their work, and skate out again in the evening;

the women skate into the towns to do their marketing ; and the children learn the use of skates almost as soon as they can walk. The roughs, too, take up their abode on the ice, and when there is snow the main canals are swept as clean as any, and a good deal cleaner than most, London pavements. When there isn't any snow to sweep away, the ingenious Dutchman finds out a crack across the canal—perhaps he makes one—puts a plank over, and holds out the hat for contributions ; or he eases the way over a dyke, which will often have to be crossed

in getting from one canal to another in skating long distances, strewing the way with straw, for which kindly action he is again not averse to drinking the wayfarer's health. The Dutchman who is not ingenious, or who is lazy, simply sweeps away the ice dust, and makes the most of his powers of



"WHEN THE FROST COMES."

persuasion. In England, such a system would lead to speedy bankruptcy for the skater ; but in Holland the mint authorities are wise enough to supply cents, worth about a fifth of a penny, and with these a sweeper or plank man is quite satisfied. I loaded my pockets with cents before I started, and "Dank u, mijnheer" was showered upon me. "Ij," by the way, is only the same as "Y" ; the Dutch spell it so, indiscriminately ; of which fact I was fairly well-informed before I left the country, inasmuch as every public-house in the place—and foreigners don't stint themselves in public-houses—was labelled in large letters, "Tapperij en Sliterij," or "Tappery en Slyttery," which, being interpreted, means "Tavern and Retail Shop." A

good instance of this interchange of vowels is the river which flows through Amsterdam, and goes by the ignominious name of the "Ij," or "Y."

* * * *

I took some time to understand the principle of The Fen Stroke. the Fen Stroke, which my friend had picked up from a Fenman in the town; but it is well worth the trouble of understanding. The effect is very ugly, as each stroke consists of a violent kick to the side, sending the weight of the body on to the other foot. This, combined with the impetus already attained, gives a long outward curve on each foot in turn, of about five yards. "Turkey" Smart is said to move fifteen yards with each sweep, and Harold Hagen, the champion, a good deal more. This makes it very light work, as it is largely a question of the balance of the body; and it is easy to go fifty or sixty miles in a day with tolerable conditions. The record is about one-hundred-and-fifty at present; but no official records have been made. My longest day's journey was from Amsterdam to Utrecht—about fifty miles by the route that I took. I left the capital by the river Amstel, which wound about terribly; and, as there was rather a strong southerly wind blowing, I sometimes had considerable difficulty in getting along. Skating in this way is just like bicycling. The ease of progression is about the same; and snow and wind in the one are about as trying as rain and wind in the other. My average rate was about eight miles an hour, but I could easily rise to ten, or often to more. Every now and then the thaw brought in by the wind had taken effect, and I had to get a board, and stumble across it through the water to land, take off my skates, and walk along until I came to a better bit of ice.

* * * *

It was a most extraordinary contrast, after skating through the deserted country parts, and passing through only an occasional village, with hardly a sign of life even there, to walk over a dyke and suddenly come upon the big town-canals simply swarming with people—old men and young men, Vrouws and Jungjuffrouws, boys and girls, and babies of not more than four or five, rushing about on skates. The soldiers with their long, flowing blue overcoats and mitre caps; the paterfamilias with his wife and family hanging on in line behind; the workmen dashing along at a terrific pace; the shop-boys with their sweethearts in front; and the servant girls

in twos and threes—all seemed to be thoroughly enjoying themselves, and appreciating the change from their work. It is extraordinary the improvement that healthy exercise makes in the appearance of people.

We saw no pale faces and thin, skinny figures, but fine broad shoulders with plenty of flesh on them, and cheeks that could never be found guilty of any further blush. It is the custom for skaters to travel tandem with a long pole, painted bright green and red, under the left arm, so as to make the party keep time together and offer less resistance to the wind. When I got tired of the big canals, I went up the "sloots," which are anything between five and twenty-



A DUTCH CANAL.

five feet across, and form a regular network all over the country. Then I would come back to the canal, with the wind behind me, at about fifteen miles an hour, close my feet, and shoot along for a quarter of a mile with the impetus. Before taking my skates off I paid one penny at one of the "Heete Melk" stalls which abound on the ice. A screen of straw, a woman, and a table with an urn and a few mugs on it form the plant; and the hot cocoa and milk given to customers is delicious.

* * * *

Well, yes, that's all right enough, no doubt, from your point of view. But to my mind skating is inseparably connected with misfortune and love-making. In these days I can manage to get along pretty well—with the aid of a stick—and love-making is not much in my line; but things were otherwise in the sweet long ago. It was a self-styled friend who undertook to teach me the art of walking a frozen pond on a pair of blunt knife-blades. Said he, "It's as easy as winking. All you've got to do is to keep your heels together and swing yourself along." With this parting injunction he towed me out to the middle, asked if I was

Bennett Coll skates on blunt knife-boards.

ready, and launched me forth with a vigorous shove. Away I went, with a good wind at my back, and straight as an arrow I flew—towards a young lady who was resting on the opposite bank. She was quite unconscious of my approach, and I knew that something horrible was bound to happen; but I could do nothing to stop my wild career. Fortunately, I had the sense to shout. The young lady looked up, and in a moment afterwards caught me in her arms—I beg to say that this happened years and years ago. I believe I must have clutched hold of her, for we spun round and round, in a kind of mad waltz, before we sat down, firmly, for a nice comfortable chat. “You stupid boy,” she said, as she began to tighten her straps; “what did you do that for?” But I was silent. I had never before seen so fair a thing. In three minutes I knew that I loved—passionately, madly, hopelessly. At the end of that time she spoke again, “Give me your hand, little boy, and I’ll show you how to turn.” Now this combination of patronage and superiority was not quite what I desired. I daresay she was about twenty-five, and I know I was just ten. However, I did not like being called a little boy; and the engagement never came off.



* * * *

He tells of a collision.

Ten years afterwards, I was standing on the frozen Cam, opposite Waterbeach; waiting, in a stiff northeaster, for Tommy Gascoigne. He and I were going to skate to Ely, and I had arranged to meet him here. Now, if the donkey had only been punctual, we should have been miles away, but, just as I was anathematising him for the fiftieth time, there came an earthquake, followed by a clap of thunder. My first impression was that I had been riven into several pieces; but when I sat up I observed a broad-shouldered country maid—also in a sitting posture—who was gazing ruefully at an arrangement of trussed fowls, broken eggs, rolls of butter, other farm

produce, and a clothes-basket. It happened that she was going to market; that she had formed her back skirts into a sail, by holding them against the basket on her head, and that she had crashed into me because she didn't know I was behind her. To tell the truth, I was rather glad the catastrophe had happened; for she was really a beautiful girl. In fact I told her so, and she called me a "silly." I asked her what was her pretty name, and she replied, "Anner'—n'—what's—yours?" Love is, indeed, a great leveller. I cared nothing for the difference in our social positions; because I knew, now, what a *man* means by love. I was proceeding to tell her this when Tommy came up and spoiled the whole thing. Moreover, his laughter was coarse and brutal when I told him I meant to write home to the governor that very night. I forget why I didn't; but I never did.

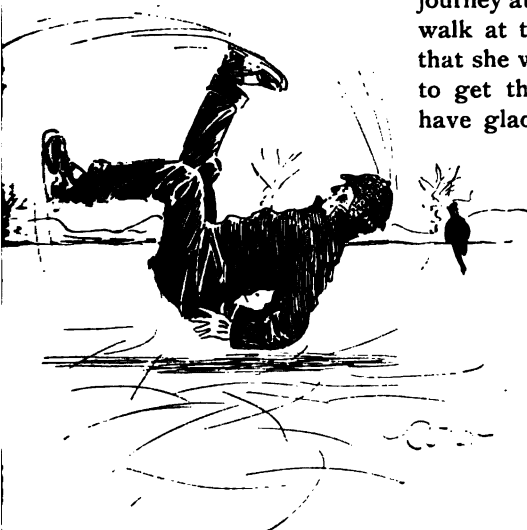
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Six winters later found me under promise to show a young lady how to cut the figure eight. She was an extremely beautiful girl; and, for the first time in my life, I found that I was deeply, seriously, earnestly in love. Now, the nearest ice was some distance away; with a short railway

journey at one end and a five-mile walk at the other. I remember that she was in a desperate hurry to get there; whereas I would have gladly trebled the distance,

because — because there was a secret yet to be revealed. Well, we reached that sheet of ice, and, for once in a while, my ill-luck stood me in good stead. In putting on my skates a heel-screw snapped, and I was saved from humiliation. "Never mind," said my companion, "you can borrow a pair from the man

over there." Hang the man over there! I pleaded fatigue,



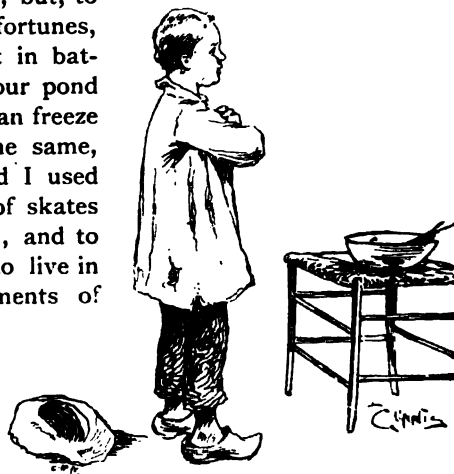
"GENERALLY ON MY BACK."

want of practice, all kinds of excuses ; and then she fixed me with her glittering eye. " I know now," she said wrathfully, " why you have been talking such nonsense all the time. I don't believe you know how to do a figure eight. You have brought me all this way for nothing ; and I insist upon walking back to the station by myself." To be candid, I think she was right. I haven't done a figure eight for a long time now—never, so far as I can recollect. If ever I do skate, nowadays, it is generally on my back ; but I like sitting down better. Now what have *you* got to say ?

* * * *

Harland wants to skate.

A pair of rusted skates hung by a peg from the wall of our lumber-room, but ice, in our part of the world, was almost as unknown as tropic fruit in Greenland. In the course of a winter, to be sure, we would have a good many bitter days, but, to prove that they weren't misfortunes, they came in single spies, not in battalions, and so the water in our pond never had time to do more than freeze a little at the edges. All the same, André (our farmer's son) and I used to gaze wistfully at the pair of skates that hung in the lumber-room, and to think what fun it would be to live in a country where such instruments of pleasure need not run to rust. We had read of skating in our story-books, and in one of them there was a beautiful coloured illustration, representing a great company of rosy-faced boys and girls gliding joyously hither and thither between the snow-covered banks of a frozen stream.



" I USED TO GAZE WISTFULLY."

* * * *

The skates are all wrong.

And then befell the terrible winter of 1874, and we had a fortnight of constant frost, and the surface of our pond became as solid as a pavement. So André and I took down the pair of skates. For me (conceive

my disappointment) they proved at once to be too big. They stuck out nearly two inches in front, and half an inch at either side ; and no matter how tight I drew the straps, they wobbled. But André's wooden shoes they fitted to a nicety, and he put them on. "I suppose you just step off on the ice, and slide?" he questioned. "Of course," I answered. But, when he stepped off on the ice, instead of sliding, he suddenly, in the most unaccountable fashion, fell plump down. "What's the matter? How did it happen?" I asked. "I must have slipped," he explained, luminously, and made as if to rise. But the strangest thing was, he *couldn't* rise—though he struggled



"HAD TO DRAG HIMSELF."

convulsively. He had to drag himself on hands and knees to the bank, and to catch hold of a bush before he could stand up. "I expect I tripped on something," he said. "You must have," assented I. And, nothing daunted, he started off again. But, again, in the same sudden unaccountable fashion, he came down with a bang. This struck us as really very odd. "Perhaps you've got them on wrong," I suggested. Yet no; from their shape it was evident they could not be meant to go on in any other way. Possibly, though, the straps weren't tight enough ; so we tightened the straps. It was not until he had fallen for a third time that we began to suspect there must be something amiss with the skates themselves. They *looked* all right, indeed ; but, since André fell as often as he tried them—since, in other words, they totally failed to serve the purpose they were designed for—it was clear they were out of order. "They're so old," said he. "And so rusty," said I. "And there may be a part missing." "Or else it's simply that they're worn out—like my watch, which won't go, no matter how much you wind it up." "Oh, that's because the spring's broken.

These haven't got any spring." "Perhaps they ought to have. Perhaps the spring may be the part that's gone." "Yes, that's so. Perhaps they ought to have a regular set of works." Anyhow, we concluded, there was no use trying them any more. "*Something* is wrong with them, that's certain." And we resigned ourselves to the situation. But it seemed a great pity that when, for the only time in our life, we had practicable ice, we shouldn't have a proper pair of skates.

* * * *

Armstrong's
Adventure.

We carried Miss de Villar up to the Hall from the lake, dripping, and protesting faintly her ability to walk ; we felt that we had a right to do so, after the trouble we had had to fish her out. She ought to have been an "inanimate form," after a quarter of an hour in that icy water ; but, as in the case of many other things that she ought to have

been, she was nothing of the kind ; and, having reached the house, had so far revived that she resolutely refused to ascend the stairs in our arms, walking up instead, almost briskly, with her boots squelching, and leaving little puddly stains on the stair-carpets. Then we retired and drank whisky-and-water round the sideboard, four saturnine silent men—Captain Pomeroy, Gerald Heap-Hooley, an undergraduate, whose name I never could remember, the Curate, whose name I did not know,—and myself. A wetter and more gloomy set of individuals I never saw. I congratulated them on their prospective joint ownership of the Humane Society's Medal, and they glared at me and at one another. I suggested that those staying in the house should go odd man out for the first use of the bath-room, and they glared at one another again, and went upstairs silently. As for



"STAINS ON THE STAIR-CARPETS."

Ethel de Villar, her sister Maud and the Heap-Hooley girls had spirited her away into seclusion, and, as the doctor had ordered her to be kept absolutely quiet, one of them dined with her in her bedroom, and they all sat up talking till midnight. They woke me up when they separated and retired to their respective rooms.

Next day the frost held, and the house had rest after 10 A.M. I had written my seventh letter, and smoked my fourth pipe, when Ethel de Villar came into the billiard-room, slightly ringed round her eyes, and a little languid in manner. "You like my tea-gown?" she said. "I thought, as all the others were out, it did not matter." I was not quite sure why it did not matter, but assumed it was a compliment. "I suppose I must meet them, some time," she continued, with a sigh, "and thank them." "Of course," I said, cheerfully;

The next day.



"TOOK YOU OVER THE DANGEROUS PLACE."

"Heap-Hooley saved your life—practically." "That's what his sisters say," she said; "but then they also say he's very young, and does not matter so much. It's awfully nice of them to say Gerald does not matter.

I'm so fond of them, I should hate them to think me horrid."

"But you mean to thank him?" I said.

"Thank him," she echoed. "Of course I do—but how about Captain Pome-

roy?" "He took you over the dangerous place—it was very careless of him."

"Yes," she said, "but when we were once in, think how he held me up. I be-

lieve I nearly choked him

too,—he was worse than I was when they got us out." "Oh, of course," I admitted, "you would have been drowned if Pomeroy had not stuck to you; and you haven't thanked him yet." "Thanked him!—Thank goodness I haven't seen him yet. Maud says he is the worst of them all—and *she* declares he did most; but then, what about the others?" "Oh, that undergraduate chap, you mean? Let's see, young Oxford brought the ladder we put across the broken ice; yes, by Jove, we should all have been out of it but for him." "I was afraid you'd say that," she said; "Grace Heap-Hooley thinks so, too—But then, I say, what about the Curate?" "Nothing about him," I retorted; "he only plumped in, and we had to fish him out—he never got near you." "But he tried," she said; and

added, in tones as near awe-struck as any I ever expect to hear Ethel de Villar use, "do you know, that Curate can't even swim!!!" "Well," I said, "of course, he showed great devotion, but then——" "So did the others," she exclaimed; "they all showed devotion, they've all been showing nothing else for days; I wonder the other girls are not more jealous, and now they're all only waiting for me to thank them to—well, can't you understand?" Most women can blush at times, so it was not that that surprised me, but the look of genuine concern in her eyes did. She was almost tearful as I seated myself gently on the sofa beside her. "By George! I believe you are right. Of course, if a man saves a girl's life he has a claim," I said; adding sympathetically, "which is it to be?" "Hush, here's



"HE COULDN'T SWIM."

the doctor," she said, and he entered the room at the moment, felt her pulse, and congratulated her on her recovery. "Lucky I was there so soon," he said, cheerfully; "she might have died." "What, did you, too, save her life?" I asked, nervously, and murmured "five," as I glanced towards her. He eyed her with marked admiration, and she reddened again, but he only said, half-turning to me: "I suppose so; but that nip of cherry brandy I'm told you gave her, was just the right thing at the right time. I daresay but for that—but I must not wait." And

he hurried off. "You make six, with your cherry brandy," she said, first screwing up her mouth, and then exploding with laughter. "Even you; how awfully funny." I understood now the sense in which I did not matter. "Don't be offended, please," she said, "do me a service"; and she got up and wrote. "Send that for me," she said presently; "I haven't got sixpence, and its a half-penny over; the post-office is a mile off; you'll get back to lunch. It's the only thing I can do—do, please, help me."

I suppose if you are asked to send off a telegram you may read it. I always do—and post-cards, too. The telegram. Hers ran, "Golightly, Scilly Islands Light Infantry, Aldershot ; You may give It out now. Ethel." What "It" was I understood next day, when I saw the *Morning Post*, just as I was leaving for town. I deposited the open paper on the billiard-room table, and departed hoping that my host's gun-cabinet was locked, and the ice on the lake impenetrable. Miss Ethel de Villar was still too ill to appear at breakfast, but I believe that, as Mrs. Golightly, the Scilly Islanders, from the colonel to the youngest drummer-boy, simply adore her.

* * * *

No, I know no skating stories worth speaking of. The first time I went skating was at Canterbury, and I thought the action was the same as in sliding until the ice sprang up and smote me on the back of the head and taught me better. The second time was in Holland, and this time there was no ice at all. Yet that was the most important of all my skating expeditions. It marked the beginning of my literary career, and if I were writing an article on "my first book," I should have a good deal to say about it. Gribble has no Story to tell.



* * *

So far as I can recollect—that is how the article would have run—I went to Holland because there had just been a tragedy in my life ; but I thought that I might just as well get a little skating at the same time. I supposed that one could be as sure of getting skating in Holland as of getting curacoa. It turned out that I was mistaken. I landed at Flushing in a drizzle, and even on the shores of the Zuyder Zee met nothing more serious than But makes miscellaneous remarks.

sleet. So I gave up all thoughts of skating, and wandered about listlessly on the towing paths by the canals, wondering whether I could not manage to pay a part of my expenses by writing something readable about the landscape. It was a long time before inspiration came to me. Though I explored the slums of Rotterdam, and wandered through the streets of Broek—the cleanest village in the world—and crossed from Monicken-dam to the Isle of Marken in a fishing smack, I felt that I had nothing to say about these interesting places which had not frequently been said before. For I was young and inexperienced in those days, and thought that people never wrote for newspapers, even for the sake of filthy lucre, unless they had got hold of some really new and original ideas. At last, however, my patience was rewarded, and an idea did actually come to me.

* * * *

Which have nothing
to do with skating.

It was at Scheveningen, of all places in the world. Upon a heavy, grey December morning I stood upon the Scheveningen sand-hills and tried to think out an article on "Scheveningen in Winter." So long as the conscious effort lasted, I still found that I had nothing in



A NATIVE.

particular to say. I gave up trying, and let myself admire the scenery without ulterior motives. Then, suddenly, a great white fog rolled up from the German Ocean and hid everything from me. The weirdness of the mist impressed me, and reminded me of other mists that I had heard or read of,—of the mist that overhung the fighters in that last fabled battle in the Land of Lyonesse,—of the mist that wrapt Heine when he walked on the shores of Nordeyney, and showed him for a moment the lost face of "die Herz-Geliebte." And then, as suddenly, it flashed upon me that there, in these impressions of the mist, was my article ready to my hand. Once more my interest in the scenery was wholly literary. I moved about in the white darkness, rolling phrases on my tongue. With all my speed I hurried back into the village, and entering a café, called for punch. They brought it me, and the waiter lent me a pencil, and I scrawled the rough draft of my first article on

the backs of letters. Afterwards I copied it out and posted it, and it was printed with my initials at the foot, and I was encouraged to try and make a living out of literature instead of continuing to teach the humanities to school-boys. That is the only skating story that I know, and if it has nothing to do with skating, that is my reader's misfortune, not my fault.

* * * *

It is clear that more skating stories would be written if only the frost girl appeared less rarely on the front page of the illustrated daily. As it is, when the first frost comes dozens of willing J.'s dip into ink and begin to pen short stories about fur-jacketed girls with brief skirts and dainty *bottines* who, on the ice, fall in love with handsome, strong-chinned, crisp-haired, young men—excellent skaters they are, too—and these couples are parted by a little misunderstanding arising from the existence of the hero's twin brother, who cannot skate and whose general character is really below reproach. The lovers are brought together again in the last three hundred words by a happy accident which occurs whilst they are on the pond at the Old Manor Park. The girl falls in the water, and the man—not the twin brother—saves her. These stories, headed—

Pett Ridge dis-approves of frost girls.



"WITH BRIEF SKIRTS."

HOW I WON A WIFE

(A ROMANCE OF THE ICE),

are despatched to editors, and before the editors have time to read the titles and pitch them into the return basket, the sun is out, smiling on the earth in the warmest possible manner. Sometimes one is accepted, and it appears months later, on a bright June day, when stout folk walk on the shady side of the street and mop their foreheads and say "Phew!" and the journal which publishes it has an inset picture in the very centre

of the story by Herr Gustav Badartist, of Dresden, entitled "A Siesta in Seville."

* * * *

The real skating stories.

The real skating stories nowadays are the problem novels written by gifted women who want to go one better than—I forget the names for the moment. The ice on which they skate is very thin in places,



"THE REAL SKATING STORIES."

but the board "Danger" seldom deters, no matter how muddy the water is beneath. If they only get over it safely it seems to be a game worth playing. Their work goes into uncountable editions, the writer is interviewed and photographed and drawn, and quartered in an expensive flat, the evening papers tell us precisely how many crumpets she eats for tea. When the skaters do happen to fall in, a modest publisher rushes to the rescue and hushes it up, and prevents the matter from getting into print. Such a one do I know. He has at the present moment a pile of skating stories about the height of his mantel-piece. He is florid of

countenance, and his best friends attribute it to constant blushing.

* * * *

I know that all girls are charming (discriminating "Une Patineuse." critics have urged that some are more charming than others), and at any rate a mere bachelor has no business to do anything but respectfully admire them, but I do make an exception in disfavour of the girl who is called "Une Patineuse" in the fashion journals. She stands on one foot, which is not a clever or a meritorious act, and I have nothing to urge against that. Her preposterous height, too, is a matter that is perhaps beyond her control. What I complain of is her face. She ought to be ruddy and beaming and jolly and excited.

She is not. She is supercilious in her manner ; she is perfectly cool, she gazes at me out of the page with the very same haughty who-the-devil-are-you sort of air that the novelette countess assumes when she rejects the lowly artist (little thinking that he is really the Lord Lovelorn in disguise) and bids him begone. I don't like her.

* * * *

For local colour, the London writer of skating stories goes to the Serpentine. He finds there red noses and white snow and blue ears, and, by night, blazing lights and coloured language. There is also in the evening horse-play, so called because no horse was ever so badly bred as to play in such a manner. Horse-play is always a popular diver-

sion in the minor suburbs, and it is played on slippery evenings with amazing assiduity. As thus. The youth (eighteen) and the lady of his choice (sixteen)—lady with a nice taste for large red hats and a fringe and magnificent boots—go for a walk. The youth leads off by affecting to stumble against the damsel. *She* is thus jerked into the roadway. Youth strolls on joyously, having scored one. Damsel approaching stealthily, gets on the near side of her companion. Suddenly *she* lunges out with *her* arm, and *he* goes into the road. One



"AT THE SERPENTINE."

to the girl. I have seen a girl of ability and tact and training score a break of four in this way, a feat which has led the other player to lose his temper. "Who are you pushin' of, M'ria?" "Why, yew." "Vurry well, then. You jest cheese it. J'ear? Cheese it, or you and me don't speak." "Awright then. Don't!" "Garn 'ome." So it is that in this world of ours, hearts are sundered and kept apart by the extravagant achieve-

ments of one. For the breaking up of friendships nothing succeeds like success.

* * * *

It is indeed a world with many drawbacks, and no
A tragic story. one is completely happy. Two boys were at the
Serpentine ; one was on the ice performing intricate
evolutions with a single skate ; the other had come up to the
bank. "Wot cheer, 'Erry," called the boy on the ice. "Cheer,
old man," responded Henry, dolefully. "Oin't you got no
skite, 'Erry?" "Yus ; jest pinched one." "Kim on, then !"
"'Ow can I kim on when I ain't got no bloomin' boots?"





BY W. L. ALDEN.

IF the proper study of mankind is man, the proper text-book with which to pursue that study is the novel. Girls—that is to say, Anglo-Saxon girls—study life assiduously by reading novels, under the mistaken impression that they are merely amusing themselves. Boys, on the other hand, seldom read novels. They are fond of stories of adventure, and the less resemblance these stories bear to real life the better they like them. Indeed, the average boy regards novel-reading as a despicable amusement fit only for girls. The result is that the boy of eighteen knows nothing whatever of life, whereas the girl of the same age knows men and women nearly as well as she will know them when she is forty. The other day I was reading a novel written by a young girl. She had been brought up in a quiet country house: she had never been in London or in any other large town: she had absolutely no personal experience of the ways of the world. And yet that girl showed in her book a knowledge of the human heart, and a familiarity with the motives and impulses governing men and women, which a man could have learned only through years of hard experience. This girl did not arrive at a knowledge of life by intuition, and the explanation of the possession of such knowledge by inexperienced girls is that they have acquired it by a careful study of novels.

Why do we not frankly admit the value of the novel as a text-book, and introduce it into our schools? Surely the intelligent study of novels would be of vastly more value to girls than

is the study of a score of branches of knowledge, most of which are of questionable use, while none is ever thoroughly learned. The curriculum of a girl's school should contain but four studies—French, German, elementary arithmetic, and novels. The pupil should begin with Trollope and Howells, and pass on through Rhoda Broughton and Hardy up to Meredith, Kipling, and Balzac. History should be studied with the aid of Scott, Weyman, Dumas, and Doyle—authors who can give the student a far truer knowledge of the essential facts of history than can be gained by reading scores of solemn chronicles written by men who fancy that they are the only historians. Girls graduated from such a school would be educated in a way fitting them for daily life. There is always danger in educating one's self, and it is much better that a girl should study novels under the guidance of a skilful teacher, than that she should select her own course and her own text-books. It is always possible that a self-taught girl may fancy that she can gain a knowledge of life by studying "*Ouida*"; just as the self-taught man often educates himself by reading Carlyle. The result in both cases is, of course, deplorable.

* * * *

The small-boy is nearly always cruel. He has no regard for the feelings of his fellows. To tease is his delight, and if he can establish a "raw" in the spiritual cuticle of his most intimate chum, he will leave nothing undone to irritate it. Nevertheless the small-boy is not consciously cruel. He is simply obtuse, and it is not until he ceases to be a small-boy that he discovers that it is mean and cowardly to hurt the feelings of other boys.

The same sort of cruelty characterises the journalistic small-boy. For some unknown reason the youthful journalist is often permitted to begin his career by writing "book notices." Now the journalistic small-boy knows that smartly written abuse of a book and its author will attract far more attention than the most careful and honest estimate of the book. He therefore makes it a point to "slate" every book that affords any opportunity for that process. Not content with pointing out the faults of the book and ignoring its merits, he leaves nothing unsaid that can wound the author. The keener and deeper he can thrust, the more notice the slaying of the unhappy author will attract. It is nothing to the journalistic small-boy that the author has worked fondly over his book; that he is passionately longing for its success; and that upon its success or failure may depend his whole future. The more the journalistic small-boy can injure the book and pain its author the better he is pleased. Of course he tells himself that he "slates" books purely in the interests of literature, and that he cannot, as a conscientious critic, permit his kind heart to interfere with his duty. He

knows, however, that this is untrue, and that his real motive is to write a smart and slashing article. If he does not know it now, he will know it when he arrives at years of discretion and kindness. The day will come when the cowardice and brutality of abusing a book simply for the sake of writing smartly will be as clear to him as it is to his elders to-day.

* * * *

No! This is not the wail of a victim. Nobody has been "slating" me, and I am not writhing under the attacks of the journalistic small-boy. I, too, have been in his place, and have "slated" books in order to show my fancied smartness. I, too, told myself the transparent falsehood that I was writing solely in the interests of literature. I need not say how heartily I am ashamed of it, but it has made me understand that the journalistic small-boy who spends his time in insulting and wounding men and women with his gibes is cruel chiefly because he is very young. If criticism is to be honest, impartial, and humane, there should be an unwritten law of journalism forbidding any man or woman under forty years of age to write a line concerning books, pictures, music, or the drama. So long as the press permits its small-boys to hoot at grown-up men and decent women, and to throw lumps of coal at them from the window of the editor's office, criticism will be as worthless as it is now. Did the critics teach Kipling how to write, or did he write his best stories before the critics learned of his existence? Did criticism prevent the harmless necessary E. P. Roe from selling untold thousands of his books? The journalistic small-boy occasionally kills a weak and foolish novel that might otherwise have gained an accidental and temporary success; but the sum of his influence upon literature is extremely small. The one proud, triumphant feature of his career is that he gives pain to scores of men and women who can neither ward off his stabs nor strike back at him.

* * * *

In the interests of book-buyers it should be made a penal offence for a novelist to publish a revised edition of any of his books. Nowadays, when a story is published as a serial, the reader has not the slightest certainty that it will not be materially altered when the author publishes it in book form. The result is that the conscientious book collector cannot content himself with buying the book in its final shape, but is compelled to buy a dozen or more numbers of the magazine in which it originally appeared. For example, Mr. Hardy published two versions of *Tess*, the one as a serial and the other as a book, and no man who wishes to have a complete set of Mr. Hardy's books can afford to do without either version. Similarly, Mr. Stevenson published in a magazine a story called *David Balfour*, which

he afterwards published in an amended form under the title of *Catriona*. Can any library be called complete which does not contain *David Balfour* as well as *Catriona*? There are two distinct versions of Kipling's *Light that Failed*, one published in America and the other published here. The latter has two chapters that do not appear in the former, and the two books end in entirely different ways. This of course compels me to buy two editions of the book, and makes me forever miserable because I cannot make up my mind which version I prefer. Then again there is Mr. Du Maurier, whose *Trilby*, as it appears in book form, differs considerably from the *Trilby* that appeared in *Harper's Magazine*. Which *Trilby* shall I omit when I bind up my complete edition of Du Maurier? Mr. George Moore has revised at least one of his books so thoroughly that the revised edition bears only a general resemblance to the original edition, but in this case both books were published in single-volume form, and the collector is not compelled to buy a lot of old unbound magazines. If this sort of thing is to become the rule, the life of the conscientious book collector will become a burden to him. If authors will kindly make up their minds what they wish to say, and then say it and stick to it, the book-shelves of their admirers will no longer consist of ragged magazines thrust in between respectably dressed books.

* * * *

I have been able to read Dr. Conan Doyle's new book *Round the Red Lamp* (Methuen & Co.) only with the very greatest caution. It is presumed to narrate the experiences of a general medical practitioner, and, being wonderfully realistic, it is naturally full of symptoms of rare and interesting diseases. Now nature has unfortunately so constituted me that I cannot read of symptoms of any kind without developing them within the next twenty-four hours. Had I read every word of Dr. Doyle's book I should now be suffering from more combined and complicated diseases than ever before afflicted any one person. Consequently I have had to read the book with a sharp look-out for symptoms, and at the first mention of one have been compelled to turn the page in order to avoid it. In this way I have undoubtedly lost much, but I have not failed to perceive in this new collection of stories all the qualities which have given to the author's novels their wide popularity. Several of these stories originally appeared in *THE IDLER*, but there are also a number that are now published for the first time. People who do not contract diseases merely by reading of their symptoms will find the book an unusually readable one. On the other hand, hypochondriacs may possibly find *Round the Red Lamp* all the more interesting for the reason that their ingenious nerves will furnish a running commentary, vividly illustrating the author's descriptions by reproducing all the early and late symptoms of

locomotor ataxis, angina pectoris, and other select diseases. At least it is to be hoped that such will be the case, for the hypochondriac ought to have some little compensation for the tortures which his fiendish nerves habitually inflict upon him.

* * * *

Comparative philology is a delightful game, but it would be still more delightful were it more a game of skill and less a game of chance. A philologist kindly writes to inform me that I am mistaken in attributing the origin of the expression, "Great Scott!" to American admiration for the late General Scott. The expression is, my philological friend informs me, derived from the German, *Grüss Gott*. Now there is, I admit, a certain similarity of sound between the two expressions, and this is quite sufficient to induce a philologist to assume that the one is derived from the other. As it happens, however, there is no connection between the two. I remember the very time when "Great Scott!" was used exclusively in the American army, and avowedly in honour of General Scott, who had just captured the city of Mexico. I remember, too, how the expression was caught up by the American people generally, and was for many years as distinctively American as is the blood-curdling New England oath, "Gaul darn ye!" I know that in saying this I am exposing myself to the suspicion of being considerably more than twenty-five years of age, but what man can hesitate as to his duty when he is compelled to choose between truth and comparative philology?

* * * *

Mr. Arthur Morrison's *Tales of Mean Streets* (Methuen & Co.) are certainly as powerful as they are painful, which is saying a good deal. They place Mr. Morrison among the very best short story writers of the day. They have much of the finish, the truthfulness, and the hard pitilessness of the stories of Guy de Maupassant. Indeed, Mr. Morrison is the only English writer who can truthfully be called a disciple of De Maupassant. He has written his stories not to please the public, but to satisfy his instincts as an artist.

Nothing can be more absurd than to find fault with a story because it does not "end happily." Nevertheless, so much of cruelty, misery, and heart-break necessarily enter into the subjects which Mr. Morrison has chosen, that even the skill with which the stories are told cannot make them attractive to the average reader. Mr. Morrison, in writing this volume, has satisfied every intelligent reader that a new and powerful story-teller has arisen. I hope that he will be content with what he has already achieved in this direction, and that, hereafter, we shall be able, not merely to admire, but to take delight in his stories.

Mr. Andrew Lang referred the other day, rather incredulously, to the alleged photographer who photographed an Indian juggler in the performance of an alleged miracle, and afterwards found no picture on the plate. The object of this story was to prove that Indian jugglers do not perform the miracles popularly accredited to them, but that they simply mesmerise the spectators, and so induce them to believe that they have seen what has in reality never taken place. This story of the camera and the Indian juggler was invented a year or two ago by a Chicago newspaper, but it is in a fair way of becoming generally accepted as a fact. Any story told of an Indian juggler has only to be persisted in for a few years in order to be accepted without question. For example, there is the story of the juggler who throws a ball of cord into the air, sends a small-boy up the cord, and afterwards climbs up the cord himself, and throws down the mangled limbs of the boy whom he has cut to pieces with his sword. This story was first told by a Moor, one Ibn Batuta, who claimed to have witnessed the feat in China in the year 1348. An Anglo-Dutchman, named Edward Melton, next asserted that he had seen the same performance in Batavia in 1670. Finally, an American journalist, one George Lunt, of Boston, wrote not many years ago an idle paragraph, in which he professed to have met an Indian juggler tramping in America who performed the same miracle for Mr. Lunt's amusement.

Now Lunt's account was confessedly pure fiction. The only authorities in support of the miracle are, therefore, Ibn Batuta in 1348, and the so-called Edward Melton in 1670. They and George Lunt are the only persons who have ever pretended that they had seen the feat performed. And yet the story has been so often repeated, that most people accept without hesitation the assertion that Indian jugglers constantly throw a ball of cord into the air, send a small boy up the cord, and afterwards climb up the cord and kill the boy. If there were a juggler in existence capable of performing this feat it need hardly be said that the managers of the Empire or the Alhambra would pay him any price to come to London and exhibit it on the stage.

* * * *

Of late "Ouida" has lost no opportunity of cursing the Italian Government generally, and Signor Crispi in particular, without the slightest regard to truth or grammar. She has always been indignant at the brutal Philistinism of a government which profanes cities like Rome and Florence by pulling down insanitary houses, and by letting sun and air into the breeding places of pestilent microbes. Now she has a new grievance in the fact that the leader of those charming Sicilian rioters, who poured paraffin over captured gendarmes, and burnt them to death, has been sentenced to a long imprisonment. Of course it would be idle to reason with "Ouida." Still, when a respect-

able periodical permits "Ouida" to make temporary use of its columns, it might at least decline to permit her mis-statements and perversions to pass current without correction. No one would gather from listening to "Ouida's" wails that the man whose imprisonment she denounces as a brutal, political outrage was the leader of an anarchical rebellion, who deserved no more mercy than was shown to Ravachol and the assassin of Carnot.

* * * *

Mr. S. Baring-Gould, in his *Queen of Love* (Methuen & Co.) tells a very interesting story in a very interesting way. It may be a matter of taste, but it seems to me that his stories would be improved were they to be pitched in a lower key. In the *Queen of Love* there are half-a-dozen characters who are unquestionably real, and yet certain distinguishing traits in each one of them are made so glaringly obvious that they give an air of melodrama to the book which it does not deserve. However, there are very many people who admire Mr. Baring-Gould's books for this very peculiarity, and they surely have a right to be gratified.

Messrs. Hutchinson & Co. have issued a cheap edition of Mr. Joseph Hatton's *Under the Great Seal*. The stars—and the Nihilists—in their courses fight in behalf of Mr. Hatton's books. No sooner did he write a novel dealing with Russian anarchists than those enterprising people began to explode bombs as if for the deliberate purpose of advertising Mr. Hatton's book. *Under the Great Seal* is mainly a Newfoundland story, and I expect to see some new complications arise in connection with the endless fishery question, which will give a fresh "boom" to Mr. Hatton's clever story. There is, however, enough of adventure and movement in the book to make it popular, without the aid of international complications; and so perhaps Mr. Hatton will attract attention to the fisheries, instead of inducing the fisheries to attract attention to his book.

* * * *

Mr. Morley Roberts' new volume of stories, entitled, *Red Earth* (Lawrence & Bullen), will do much for his reputation. The stories are certainly as powerful as any of their predecessors, and they show a distinct advance in the matter of style. Take, for example, *The Measuring of the Dhow*. I cannot see how any flaw can be found in this delightful little sketch. Its realism, its humour, and the light and firm touch which characterises every sentence, are worthy of all praise. Most of the stories are sombre, and undeniably "bluggy," but of their power, and the admirable way in which they are told, there can be no question. In *Red Jim of the S.P.*, there is a description of an approaching but invisible railway train, which demonstrates that Mr. Roberts

can convert even that most prosaic of all objects, a goods train, into poetry. To transmute the prosaic into poetry, and the vulgar into true tragedy, are feats which should rank far above the mere transmutation of metals; and these are precisely the feats of literary alchemy which Mr. Roberts has performed.

* * * *

The Story of Sonny Sahib, by Mrs. Everard Cotes (Macmillan & Co.), is a story of the Indian Mutiny. The usual recipe for making stories of the mutiny, is to mix equal parts of blood and Hindustani words; but Mrs. Cotes, who, as yet, is better known as Miss Sara Jeannette Duncan, has preferred pathos to blood, and humour to Hindustani. The result is a delightful little story, the hero of which is an English boy saved from the Cawnpore Massacre; brought up as a Rajput, and reconverted into an Englishman by an act of bravery and fidelity.

* * . * *

Mankind may be broadly divided into two classes—the fortunate people who have read Daudet, and the unfortunate who have not. Both classes have equal reason to rise up and call Mr. Robert Harborough Sherard peculiarly blessed for having written *Alphonse Daudet* (Edward Arnold). The reader of Daudet's novels will learn from this book the story of Daudet's life, and how his various books of prose and verse had birth and grew into ripe maturity; while he who has never read a line of Daudet can, with Mr. Sherard's help, quickly and easily gain a clear conception of what manner of man the great Frenchman is, and what are the chief characteristics of his novels and poems. The book is not merely a life of Daudet, and an acute and loving appreciation of his character, but it is also a bibliography and criticism of his books. In other words, it tells all that the public need to know of the man. Mr. Sherard is peculiarly well-qualified for the task of writing such a book, since he is intimately acquainted with Daudet and his works, and moreover possesses in a high degree the true critical faculty. His *Zola* was a noteworthy book, but his *Daudet* is, in several respects, distinctly superior to its predecessor.

